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THE CHICAGO LEDGER

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The White Hands; or, The Terrors of Marston House.

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By T. C. HARBAUGH, author of "Cleopatra's Necklace," "Wizard of Catoctin," etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.
THE TERROR OF MARSTON HOUSE.

The storm has ceased. For two hours I had lain awake listening to the roll of heavy thunder across the heavens and watched from my window that looked out upon the Lone Forest the vivid flashes that nearly blinded me.

"A terrible night for any one to be abroad." I had said many times. "I pity the poor devil who is forced out such a night as this. I wonder if the Colonel is in yet?"

When the last pattering drops had struck the pane I rose and drew aside the curtains.

I could see nothing. The night was still dark outside and now and then I heard the noise of the wind. It stirred the old trees that leaned against the house and every little while a tiny draught of air reached my cheek. I am not easily frightened, nor do I believe in the supernatural, but that night, destined to be so full of the tragical, it stole into my soul and I could not keep it out.

Marston House stood above the river that sang out to the sea not very far away. It was an ancient structure, built in the middle of last century and had been inhabited by generations of Marstons, nearly all of whom had strange events in their lives.

For instance, there was old Gilbert Marston, author and soldier, who was one night found dead in his bed with distorted features and the imprint of a great hand at his throat, then his grandson had departed this life in precisely the same manner and I remember that these two mysteries had never been solved.

These were but two of the tragedies of Marston House; there were others just as dark to which one could not refer without a shudder, and the whole countryside gave the house a wide berth, the humble peasants always cutting it out of their journey. I had been almost forced to take up my residence there, for I was distantly related to Colonel Marston, and at the time had no other home.

It is no disgrace to acknowledge that I was an adopted child, adopted by the old man himself, because I had no place in which to lay my head. He was kind enough, but strange and taciturn, had traveled a great deal, some said to escape the doom of the family.

I had grown to manhood under the roof of Marston House. My boyhood had been spent in its spacious grounds, underneath the lordly oaks; I knew every path in its forests and creeks that ran through the estate had laved my feet on many occasions. The old mansion itself was as well known to me as the woods about it. It had old-fashioned chambers, dark and uncanny, its deep, dark corridors and, yes, its forbidden places.

But none of these mon.

On the night of the storm I had been restless. I had taken up a ghostly volume to amuse myself and had read of some terrible things, so after putting down the book I went to my chamber, feeling strange and "shaky."

Suddenly while at the window listening to the last drops of rain I heard a door open.

Alicia had a room almost opposite mine in the old house. She was the trusted maid of the place and a tall woman of six-and-twenty, comely and stout, but with a disposition I had never fancied. She had evinced a hatred to me, I knew not why, and more than once I had attempted to fathom it. But I would not ask her; no, I had imbibed some of the Marston's pride myself.

I was so sure that I had heard her door open that I turned from the window and went to my own portal. Opening it easily I looked into the hall.

At first I saw nothing for the light there was dim, all at once I made out the shadowy outlines of a human figure at the maid's door.

Alicia? No, it was not the tall, ruddy girl.

Instead it was the figure of a man. From the very first the man riveted my whole attention. He stood at the door, leaning slightly against it, his figure more and more revealed as I gazed and I saw that he was a stranger.

When had he entered Marston House? The question came involuntarily to my lips. I had never seen him before and the shadows prevailed as much in the corridor that I could not make out his face to my satisfaction.

He looked foreign and I thought him a Frenchman one minute and an Italian the next, but he vanished suddenly.

Remembering the book I had read before retiring I rubbed my eyes. Perhaps I had seen no one. The man might be a phantom of an excited mind. However, I remained at the door watching for his reappearance and listening. Perchance he would reward me with another inspection, but he came not.

For an hour I stood with the door ajar and my gaze riveted on one particular spot. The thunders had gone down the highways of the heavens and the stars were out again. Again I wondered if Colonel Max Marston, who had been down to the city, had returned.

"Let it go," said I, vexed at last. "What's the use of staring at a closed door? The Colonel probably came in in advance of

the storm and if Alicia has a lover 'tis no business of mine."

I closed my door and drew back into my little chamber.

"I will get a little sleep now," said I. "It is past midnight and I am going to the city in the morning and will want some rest before the journey."

Ah! I did not get to the city then.

In a little while sleep came to my eyes and I was dreamless of what was passing round me.

All at once I was sitting bolt upright on the bed. Some one was pounding on my door.

I sprang across the room and, remembering my half habited condition, caught the knob and cried out:

"What is it?"

"Murder!" cried a voice which I thought I recognized.

"Where?"

"In the house!"

"Who is out there?"

"Clifford."

Miss Clifford was the Colonel's niece and heir and as handsome a girl as was ever sheltered by Marston roof.

"In a moment," said I. "I will join you—where?"

"Here," answered the same voice which was full of terror as its accents told me. "Come out as soon as you can, Herbert."

I got into my clothes or at least a part of them as soon as possible and opened the door. The white-faced girl was leaning breathless against the wall.

"Murder, you said?" I exclaimed as she seized my hand and pressed it.

"It is in the round chamber below."

That was all.

"You have been there?"

"Yes, yes, but only for a second. It is horrible!"

"Come, then."

She drew back with a shiver.

"No, no! Go yourself, Herbert. Let me remain away. It is there, I say."

"But you will go to your room?"

"I will go—somewhere," she whispered as I felt her lean against me and shudder again. "I will see you after you have been there. And I believe the gems are gone, too."

I turned away and bolted for the stair. In the excitement of the moment I did not look after Clifford, but when I reached the landing I looked back. She was gone!

CHAPTER II.

A MYSTERY OF THE ROUND CHAMBER.

The "round chamber," as it was called, was on the ground floor and in the west wing of the house. It was a large room with a lofty, ceiling and adorned with many trophies which Colonel Marston had bought from abroad. It was endeared to me by many memories, for there I had spent many happy moments among the treasures it contained, looking them over with boyish zest and hearing from my benefactor's lips the story of their getting.

I had heard that it had been the scene of at least one of the several tragedies connected with the old house. But upon this subject Colonel Marston was secretive. He never referred to them and what I had heard came from the lips of servants.

The house was quiet when I reached the main floor that I doubted Clifford's story.

There could not be murder in the mansion without cries from excited servants; crime could not stalk through its old corridors without some one calling out like a blood-hound on its trail.

I hesitated at the door which led into the round chamber.

Perhaps if it had not stood slightly ajar, left so by Clifford's hand, I thought, I might have turned back. I had no heart for meeting red murder face to face and I thought many strange things and as dark as strange while I halted at the portal.

But at last I pushed the door open.

The grayish light of early morning stole into the room and flitted across the floor.

I first saw the old collection of trophies and among them the old knight in armor; then I noticed the swords in their rack and at last the thing that lay on the floor.

The thing, I say. To me it was little else. For it did not have human shape at first glance. It looked like a heap of rags piled on the rich red carpet and I fell back with a faint laugh for Clifford's fright.

But when I advanced and leaned over the object I caught sight of a face and then of a hand that protruded from beneath the heap.

"My God!" fell from my lips. "The girl did not lie!"

Becoming bold I pulled some of the covering from what I had found and started back with a cry.

It was not Colonel Marston.

Instead I was looking into a dark, swarthy face, one I had never seen before—the face of a man of sixty with a long chin and a hooked nose. I could not see his eyes for they were closed, and I fell to inspecting his hands which were thin and strangely white.

The man was dead!

There was a something about him that mystified me for he looked no foreign like, though I thought that I had a clue to wondering what brought him to Marston House.

I turned toward the door at last thinking of Clifford when I heard a footstep behind me.

In another instant I stood face to face with Marston himself.

A glance told me that he had not just come here. He must have been in the house for hours, probably had come back before the storm, and the moment he saw me he stopped, staring, and threw up one hand.

"You here, boy?" he cried, starting as it seemed to me at the sound of his own voice. "When did you come in?"

"Just now," I answered at the same time pointing to the figure on the carpet.

"What is this?" and Marston sprang forward. "In the name of heaven how did this wretch get in the house and when?"

I shook my head.

"The man is dead," said I and then I fell to looking at my benefactor with half accusing eyes.

The Colonel bent over the body and rolled it half way across a breadth of carpet.

I watched closely.

"You are right, Herbert," said he, looking up into my face. "The man is dead, and see here!"

He had torn open the dead man's shirt and I saw at the neck the imprint of human fingers.

Marston shuddered preceptibly as he showed me the marks.

As suddenly as he had stooped over the dead man he sprang to his feet.

"Who knows of this?" he cried clutching my sleeve.

"Clifford and I——"

"What does the girl know?"

"She summoned me."

"Where is she?"

"In her chamber, probably."

"She did not come down with you, then?"

"No."

His face twitched convulsively.

"Are you sure the rest of the house knows nothing about this—tragedy?"

"I speak only for Clifford and myself."

"And not for any of the others?"

"No."

He crossed the room and shut the door gently, but with firmness.

Then he came back to me, after another look down at the murdered man, he said in low whispers.

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"I want this to be a secret, This man—" He paused and again threw a look at the terrible thing on the floor.

This man met the same fate that has visited others under this roof. You see the marks on the throat?"

I nodded and looked at the marks to which he referred still visible in the light of morning.

"This wretch came to his doom in Marston House. Don't forget that, boy."

"Do you know him?"

Never will I forget the look that met my query. Colonel Marston started and I thought for a moment he would drop to the floor, but he controlled his nerves and kept his feet. The last bit of color vanished from his face. He gasped again before he resumed:

"What I know is nothing to you, boy," said he. "This man is dead. We all die sometime. Now if you will go and bring Clifford here——"

"She has seen it once," I broke in, hoping to spare the girl another sight of the dead. "She was nearly overcome when I left her and I fear——"

"I want her." You say you two with myself are the sole possessors of this secret. I want to swear both of you to eternal secrecy and to—"

"But the authorities must surely know of this!"

"Why should they?"

His hand like an eagle's talons was at my arm again and I felt the long fingers sinking into my flesh.

"Yes why should they know?" he repeated. Think you that I am going to have my name and house dragged into unenviable light? I am the last of the Marston's and I expect to die as the rest have died, but the world need not know of this tragedy. I will not have the sleuths of Scotland Yard swarming in this house. I will not, I tell you. Go for Clifford. I will watch here."

He shoved me almost brutally toward the door for he was a man of leonine strength and even after I had passed into the hallway I felt the grip of his fingers on my arm. The door was slammed behind me and I heard the click of the bolts as for some terrible mystery that might never be solved.

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH I ENCOUNTER ALICIA.

With the seal of silence on our lips placed there by the master of Marston House—I wondered how that would happen next.

Just what had become of the body of the man found strangled in the round chamber I did not know, but I believe that it had been carried off by Colonel Marston. He certainly knew the dead.

Many and long had little conferences in secret at which we went back over the events of those startling hours, but we were not throw any light on the puzzle. Why had that man come to Marston House? And where had he come he? More than this, whose hand had strangled him, and why had Colonel Marston been so desirous of keeping the secret from the world?

I was sure that the man I had but dimly seen in the room during the storm had come from the maid's room, but I dared not question her in my capacity of spy upon the question. In short, man though I was, I had a wholesome dread of the tall woman.

One day nearly a week after the scenes I have narrated I came face to face with the tall girl in the garden.

It was not her custom to invade that part of the house and I seldom saw her there myself, but fate seemed to have drawn us together for a purpose.

In one hand she found the deep, sloe black eyes of Alicia fastened upon me.

She came forward with agile tread and stopped right in front of me where I stood near the little table containing some of the costly things which Marston had brought across the sea.

I knew she had a message for me.

"Mr. Glenn," said Alicia with a hasty glance toward the door as if she half expected to be interrupted, "were you awake the night of the last storm?"

"Yes, I could not sleep for the constant thunder," I answered.

"You were up, then?"

"It was impossible to keep abed."

"And at the door?"

This was quite pertinent and I felt that I had been seen the night I stood with the door ajar watching the man in the corridor.

"I might have been at the door——"

"Come," broke in Alicia. "No evasiveness. You were at the door."

"And if I were——"

Her eyes took on a snap that brightened them.

"Well," said I, becoming bolder, "if you will have the truth without evasiveness I was in the door."

"I thought so. You were eavesdropping, Mr. Glenn?"

"Not really so," I said. "I heard a door open and shut and you know that at that hour doors do not usually do that in that part of the house."

I looked to see what effect my words which were almost an accusation would have on her, but she stood her ground through all. Plus thought, drew close together.

"It is a confession!" she exclaimed. "Now, what did you see, Mr. Glenn?"

"A man at your door, Miss Compton."

"At that hour?"

"Yes."

"Was it was this man like?"

I wondered if she was only playing with me for a purpose or whether after all she did not know that the man in the hall had been there.

"If you saw him,"—began I when she placed one finger on my arm and leaned forward.

"Never mind whether I saw him or not," she said, resolutely. "Tell me what he was like."

I did so. I described the person seen in the hall by the light of the storm and while I talked I watched the maid narrowly for any change of countenance escape me.

She remained for the most part calm, I was startled when I got through whether she had had any dealings with the mysterious man or not. It was a puzzle to me. If Alicia had been in the room with the nocturnal visitor she could keep her secret well and her face was absolutely under her control.

But glancing down I noticed that her other hand and both of her fingers were eager to close on my throat, and when she had finished I saw that a little matter that gives me a good deal of concern."

"Now, Mr. Glenn," said Alicia with another glance toward the door. "Whom have you told about this scene?"

"Miss Clifford."

"And the master?"

"He overheard me and I told him."

She seemed to catch her breath for she started and looked me once more in the eye.

"Did you know the man in the hall?" she asked.

"I did not."

"It was a total stranger, then?"

"Yes."

"And have not seen him since?"

"Not I."

"Tell me the truth, sir. You did not see him in the room during the storm?"

If she thought I had seen the same man in the secret chamber in the round chamber she was mistaken, for there was a difference between the two. The man I had seen in the hall was not the man found in the round chamber unless——

"I do not know the man there," said I, returning look for look. "Was there a man in the round chamber that same night?"

That is more than I have yet discovered the maid with a smile. "You will keep your own counsel, then?"

"Which one?"

I stared at my own words and regretted them the moment they had left my lips. A man will make mistakes during a life of thirty years and I felt that in another moment I had committed a serious blunder.

"Then there is another?" the girl echo. "Then there is another secret? You are under oath not to you not, Mr. Glenn?"

I did not answer.

"I understand!" cried she, falling back a step or two and I found myself about to hide anything from us."

"Then you are not speaking for yourself alone."

The words went home. She came forward with the quickness of a panther and in another moment her hands had fallen upon my shoulders.

"Have a care!" came through her white, glistening teeth. "Do not think that you are safe because you have found out the house has given you shelter. There are other powers that are greater than he. You are under oath, I know it. Who administered the oath?"

I had resolved not to betray the master of Marston House and I therefore shut my teeth hard and resolved to keep my secret in the face.

At the same time I had been pushed against the wall and her hands had fastened on my shoulders like the talons of an eagle.

"It is a seal of silence?" said I "No matter what I may do or say, I will not betray that person."

She threw me to one side and straightened in the middle of the room.

"Then you will find yourself in the net!" she cried. "The claws of the White Hands will fall upon you—fool that you are!"

In another second I was the sole tenant of the parlor.

CHAPTER VI.

THE THUNDERBOLT FROM ITALY.

A few minutes after my exciting meeting with the tall maid of Marston House I found myself summoned to the library.

Upon entering I came face to face with Colonel Marston.

The master was quite alone. He leaned back in an old-fashioned, but rich armchair at his favorite desk and seemed to be waiting for some one.

"Lock the door, Herbert," he said the moment I entered.

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I turned the key in the lock and came forward.

Marston pushed a chair out for me and I sat down facing him. I could not but notice how he had changed since the mystery of the round chamber. I had noticed this before in Clifford and had often spoken about it when alone.

"I have sent for you, Herbert," began Marston, "to tell you about a little matter that gives me a good deal of concern."

"Now, but did not speak.

He reached half way across the open desk and picked up a letter which I doubted not had arrived in the last mail. Toying with it in a half-absent manner he glanced from the envelope to me and at last proceeded:

"The writer of this letter makes a formal demand for Miss Clifford's hand."

I could not repress the start that followed the master's words.

I did not know that Clifford had a lover. I was not aware that any one had ever approached Colonel Marston for her hand, and now that he should say that some one had made a formal demand for that pretty member, was more than a surprise—it was a shock. I was dazed, quite sky.

I must have presented a singular appearance to the man in the arm-chair, for he smiled before he lowered the letter or ventured to read the envelope of its contents.

"The writer is a man whom I casually met in Europe. I took with me over there Clifford's picture and it seems that it fascinated him from the first."

"When he has seen her?" I cried.

"They have never met. It is love through the medium of the camera. There have been other cases like this, no doubt."

I felt so. In fact, I had a friend who had loved a face on the cover of "Ladies' Card" and the wedding which eventuated had turned out happily. But I did not tell the master this.

"The writer," he proceeded, "is one Count Fasili, an Italian nobleman, a distinguished citizen of Turin, where I met him. He comes of good family, I believe—the old Fasilese—but that makes no difference. Blood is sometimes tainted and does not run the same color through every generation."

"That is true."

"I'm glad you agree with me," smiled the old man and continued: "It is love with Clifford, or at least he thinks he is, and now asks for her hand."

"Does he write from his native country?"

"Yes, and from his native city. The letter has been a long time, I know not why. It should have arrived before——"

The master paused abruptly and checked himself as if he were on forbidden ground.

"Before the storm?" said I.

He stared at me as a person who suddenly is confronted by a deadly reptile, and his hand fell from the edge of the desk.

"Since the storm, perhaps, yes," he said. "This letter should have reached me prior to that night. Count Fasili mentions in it his intention of taking a trip to England and of coming here."

"That he came in advance of the letter?"

The master nodded, but did not speak.

At that moment I heard a faint but distinct footstep beyond the door.

Turning my head I beheld a moment and then turned my body in the chair.

"Have we eavesdroppers?" asked Colonel Marston.

"I thought so."

"Go and see."

I went across the room and unlocking the door quickly threw it open and looked beyond it. That moment I caught sight of a vanishing garment some distance away. It was the skirt of a lady's dress.

I closed the door and came back.

"It was nothing," said I, keeping to myself the secret of the dress, for it might belong to Clifford, and in another moment I had resumed my chair.

"Now, Herbert, I must answer the count," said the master. "He makes a plain demand—no superfluous words."

He handed me the letter and I read it in silence. It was a confession—a cold one, I thought—of love mingled with a demand for Clifford's hand. Reading between the lines it seemed to me that the writer possessed some influence, and if not Colonel Marston, for he had chosen his words cruelly and each sentence turned into my brain like red-hot irons.

When I had finished reading the count's letter I laid it on the desk and looked at the master.

"It's a bit of cold-blooded courtship," said I with a faint smile. "The count evidently has Clifford's picture and seems to be an adept at that."

"He is an adept at more than that!" exclaimed the master. "I have to send him an answer by the outgoing mail."

"Have you framed it?" I asked.

"Not yet, Herbert. There is, as I have suggested, a possibility that the count is in England——"

"What is the count like?" I questioned eagerly. "Could we have the photograph of Fasili?"

"I have nothing but a cut that appeared in an Italian paper after his great winnings at the races. He came to the front by his stupendous wagers——"

"Would you let me see it?"

The master of Marston House whirled his chair till it confronted the desk, and in another moment he was searching various pigeon holes. Suddenly he turned to me with a bit of newspaper in one hand.

"I was beginning to have my doubts about it," said he. "This is Count Fasili."

I reached out and took the paper from his hand.

In another second a cry escaped me and I was staring at the printed face of the white surface of the Italian paper.

It was the same face I had seen in the corridor of Marston House the night of the storm—the same dark, sinister face.

"What is it, sir?" cried Colonel Max, leaning forward like a man suddenly bereft of reason. "Have you lost your reason, Herbert? What has that face in it for you? Tell me——"

"It is the same!" cried I, rising to my feet. "I swear it is the same——"

"To what, boy?"

"To the fact that that man was in this house on the night of the storm and—and—the murder!"

"Herbert was the quick retort. "In this house—on that night! My God, no! It is impossible!"

The master of Marston House collapsed in his chair and sat there dazed—struck dumb, as it were, by the revelation.

In next week's issue of this paper another installment of this mystical story will appear. Every subscriber to the Ledger is entitled to a free camera or patterns as advertised in one of the issues thereof.

GET POWER

The Supply Comes From Food.

If we get power from food, why not strive to get all the power we can. That is only possible by the use of carefully selected food that exactly fits the requirements of the body.

Poor fuel makes a poor fire and a poor fire is not a good steam producer.

"Brains" mean knowing how to select the right food to fit my needs, I suffered grievously for a long time from stomach trouble, then was born in a little town in Missouri.

"It seemed as if I would never be able to find out the sort of food that was best for me. Anything and everything I could eat would stay on my stomach. Every attempt gave me heart-burn and filled my stomach with gas. I became a mere skeleton until I finally became a living skeleton and in time was compelled to keep to my bed.

"A few months ago I was persuaded to try Grape-Nuts food, and it had such a good effect from the very beginning that I have kept up its use ever since. I was surprised at the ease with which it digested it. It proved to be just what I needed. All my unpleasant symptoms, the heart-burn, the inflated feeling which gave me so much pain disappeared. My weight gradually increased from 86 to 116 lbs., my figure rounded out, my strength came back, and I am now able to do my housework and enjoy it. The Grape-Nuts food did it." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

A ten days' trial will show anyone some facts about food.

"There's a reason."

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A Fine Kidney Cure.

Mr. A. S. Hitchcock, East Hampton, Conn., (the Chief), says he will not suffer from Stranger and Bladder troubles will write him, he will tell you where, direct them to the perfect home cure he used.

Attention Not Admiration.

Miss Gargoyle—I was very much admired at the concert yesterday. I noticed a refined one gentleman who did not take his eyes off me the whole evening.

Miss Sharpe—Did the gentleman have a black mustache, waxed on both ends?

Miss G.—Do you know him?

"I know of him. He is a detective. He was there to watch the pregnets."

Good for Her.

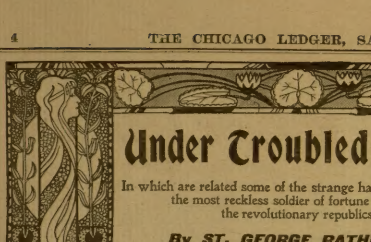
Two ladies lived near one another, and were the best of friends. But the first envied the second her cook. She actually went to see the cook one morning, and offered her more money than she was then getting. But the loyal cook declined to change her place.

Two or three days later the two ladies met at a dinner party, and the second cut the first dead.

"Why, Mrs. Jones," said the hostess, "you know Mrs. Brown, don't you?"

Mrs. Jones, with a sniff, replied:

"I believe not, the sometimes calls on my cook, I understand."



Under Troubled Skies;

In which are related some of the strange happenings that befel the most reckless soldier of fortune known in the revolutionary republics.

By ST. GEORGE RATHBORNE.

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CHAPTER IV.

POSTPONED.

The Chilean colonel made a fine salute as he came to a full stop before the door of the caravansary that fronted the plaza, though there was a touch of grim satire in his manner.

"Have I the pleasure of addressing Senor Mullane?" he asked, fluently, for having been attached to the diplomatic corps in Washington, he could converse in English almost as well as in his own tongue.

"You are, sir," replied the young Kentuckian, calmly.

"We had just arrived by steamer from the north?"

"Quite true—ashore only half an hour. Can I do anything for you, Colonel?" added Bob, desirous of drawing the enemy out.

"I shall have to request you to accompany me, young senor."

"Ah, I see, a sort of paternal government, always on the lookout to better the conditions of its citizens and guests; you would take me to another hotel, which is believed to be better than this. My dear sir, I am very well satisfied, and while thanking you very much, must respectfully decline."

The officer shrugged his shoulders. He could only tell us yet whether the cards baited him, or was as simple as he made out.

"The senor mistakes—we are come on a stern duty, not to tender a friendly welcome. We do not travel in such company us—we demand it!" grandiloquently.

"Ah, that have come to arrest me, then, and only half an hour ashore! Kind sir, would you mind enlightening me a little as to the nature of the dreadful crime of which I am accused?"

Really, Mullane's coolness must have been exasperating to the soldiery, but he prided himself on being a gentleman, and the courtesy of his race would not allow him to be outdone in politeness.

"It is not required that the senor be told why his presence is requested at the cuartel, but because he is a stranger and may not familiar with our strict customs. I will oblige him, senor, then, that it is understood that in defiance to our laws he has brought ashore without declaring the same a number of effects upon which a heavy duty is pronounced. This is an offense which we cannot treat lightly, nor does ignorance excuse the same." We are ready to start, Senor Mullane."

"Oh, but I am not, you see. The hour's late, the day well spent, and I'm a little weary after so long a voyage. I must ask to defer this insignificant matter until tomorrow, when, if there is anything to pay, I shall gladly hand over the amount. Thank you, Colonel, for your kindness," was the way Bob put it.

Ribocco stared. Why, the man hardly knew what to make of such amazing simplicity, or was it pure nerve? At any rate, he immediately dropped his air of condescending familiarity, and assumed the stern lock of a martinet.

"All this is useless talk, senor—you must accompany us at once," he said, taking a step forward, as though to place a hand of authority on the other.

"Let me see your warrant," demanded the American, quietly, only to prolong the scene until his accomplice could put in an appearance.

"Sir, I am no police officer—you insult me. The military branch of the government needs no document in making an arrest. But I shall talk no more."

"Ah, indeed! but it's the same I do not mean to accompany you unless forced by circumstances stronger than my own powers."

"What, you would resist? Senor, I represent the government of Chile!"

"And I represent the government of the United States. When you lay hands on me you insult my flag, for which you will have to apologize, make certain of that. Believe, I am not one to say but that I would be within my rights if I defended myself as a gentleman knows how."

He put his hand back of him in a manner known to Western men, though there was nothing more deadly in his hip-pocket than a wallet; but evidently the soldier imagined he was about to inaugurate a disturbance of some sort, for he gave a hurried order to his attendants, who drew their guns and covered the desperate Yankee.

It was the first time in his life that Bob had experienced the peculiar pleasure of looking into the frowning muzzles of firearms, yet somehow he did not appear to be distressed. From the way in which he gave a nervous little laugh it would seem that he had served his time where the roar of battle punctuated the air with its clamor.

He knew what was expected of him, perhaps through instinct, for he immediately raised his arms above his head, meanwhile saying, jocosely:

"I surrender, Colonel; it was not a gun I was reaching after, but something supposed to be even more influential in some parts of the world—my pocketbook."

"You will find us above bribes, senor—we leave that to Yankee pigs. For the last time I ask whether you will accompany us quietly?"

It was apparently the last call. Bob thought he would have to yield if hard pushed; but all the same he was pleased to hear the voice of Rocket taking a part in the conversation.

"Ah, Colonel Ribocco, my respects to you. Permit me to state that this gentleman is under my protection, and that I will be personally responsible for him at any time he is wanted. I represent His Excellency in the matter, and I am certain you will allow me to assume the necessity of showing official documents," was what the strange dictator said, as he stepped to Bob's side.

Plainly the officer was disturbed, for he showed anxiety in his looks.

He had to reconcile two conclusions with Rocket before, and always the same inscrutable mystery appeared to that he dreaded to come in touch with the wizard.

It would not do to show the state of alarm that existed within, so he pulled himself together and put on a brave front.

"Senor Rocket, I obey only His Excellency's representative, but in this case such offense is so flagrant that I must be made an example of," he declared, looking anywhere but straight into Rocket's glowing orbs, for there he felt the overmastering power that lay there.

"Bah! Colonel, enough nonsense! Why, he has declared everything to me, and I hold the money to pay duty on every article he's brought ashore. Come, you have heard the case of counse, Colonel!"

Then, as he saw no immediate judgment to you, and paid everything, I have no case, and gladly wash my hands of the matter, senor, perhaps we may meet again—for the present, then, good-evening."

His manner was not at all nice when delivering himself of this little speech, for it over dislike shone in a many eyes, it certainly did when the colonel flashed one last look into Mullane's face. Plainly, if fortune did bring them together again it might be under more tempestuous conditions than now reigned.

Rocket was chuckling, of course.

"You couldn't have given him more pleasure if it gives me to upset the calculations of that fine bird. He thinks himself so utterly clever that it comes mighty hard for him to swallow dirt. I tell you he's got it in for me more than a little, and would like to as long as your arm, I reckon. H'm! well, he may pay it off, in order to do so he must get up earlier than he's been in the habit of doing, you just bet. Now, perhaps you're in for a little

no longer—he knew it for a certainty, and nerved himself to meet the worst.

It was almost dark in the corridor, but he groped his way along, hoping to still run across his guide, who might have hurried ahead in order to investigate some suspicious happening.

The cat was soon out of the bag, for even as he wended his way along the passage in this direction a light suddenly flashed around him, and he heard a cold, chuckling laugh.

Somehow it occurred to Bob that long ago he had many times had to hear this same sound, and old memories were immediately resuscitated.

Consequently he was not surprised when upon turning around he set eyes on the face of the man who had been seated at Bessie's side in the vehicle, at the time he watched the flow of passers-by in the square.

It was Don Gazaboo all right, and while he smiled, there was that in his steel-like eyes that boded no good for our young friend.

"Ah, there, how d'ye do, Uncle Silas?" Bob said, as easily as he could under the circumstances. "I have had to call the other in those days far back in the past, when their relations were always strained.

"I see you have not changed in the least —the same monumental nerve as when you were a boy. But, to call it the act of a gentleman to sneak into my house like a thief, and steal stolen love vows with my daughter, because something told you I would not look on the scene coyly? It's just what I would expect from a son of your father."

Now Bob knew the other was endeavoring to arouse his temper. It had ever been his way when angry, and he tried to control himself.

He also understood that this had all been a cleverly executed game of his ancient enemy to lure him into the toils for some purpose unknown. At once did he dream that Bessie had been anything but an innocent party in the transaction—that accommodating Dona Sara must bear the blame.

"Suppose we leave my father out of the question entirely. What I am rests on my shoulders alone. Yes, fearing that you would never consent to let me meet my sister, I confess I took this means of doing so. Perhaps I did wrong and I should have asked an interview with you first," said Mullane, fanning to and fro, for he was in a troubled state of mind.

The other uttered an exclamation of anger.

"What, the act of our pretending a friendship neither of us feels? Here, let me throw off the mask for once and all. You are relative to me when you remain at home, but had you stayed there I would have let you sleep slumber, when you came down to my new country and try to interfere in my affairs, why you arouse all the devil in my nature and beware must suffer. Give me your solemn word that you will leave Chile by the next steamer, and never attempt to hold communication with my daughter again, and I may be merciful still."

"And if I decline?" demanded the young man.

"You will soon wish you had never quitted Kentucky. It's a country of wonderful possibilities, and I have power to punish as well as reward. Your fate might be a terrible one, and no one ever be the wiser.

It was easy to believe the man spoke the truth, for his cruel eyes glowed with a hatred that must have been born of fatal, his life among the people of Spanish blood had not been conducive to any change in his naturally savage disposition, but rather added to its worst elements.

Bob considered gravely.

He thought he could understand something of the danger that hovered over his head, for he had learned much about the Spanish Inquisition, he somehow had an idea some of those horrible cruelties were still practiced among the descendants of the bold mariners who came out from Spain and settled the New World.

Before his mind flashed memories of the charming girl whom he had so recently held his brotherly chat, and the delirium joy he had felt to see her once again. Should he betray her trust, and promise to leave Chile without another attempt at communication? He spoke to arrow indignant, for the thought of Colonel Rocket lent him a strange buoyant courage.

"Well, I decline to skip at your request, sir," he said, coolly.

He thought the other looked actually pleased.

"Don't ever say I didn't warn you, young fool," he muttered between his teeth.

"Oh, I'll acquit you of all the evil consequences, never fear. I'm an American citizen, and the friend of such in a friendly country, whose laws I am innocent of breaking.

"Lofty sentiments, but don't be too sure of what you say. Already you have incurred the displeasure of those elements which may be in power here tomorrow. When you have had a full quick and terrible," declared the owner of the noble palace, with no long fring flowing his hand.

"That means because Colonel Rocket is my friend. Well, I'm willing to take what comes, as long as I have nothing to fear at man behind me. But suppose you show me the way out of your castle, Uncle Silas, since I am such an unwelcome visitor."

Uncle Silas got off one of his sweet chuckles again.

"You came without invitation from me, and now that you are here perhaps I may find it convenient to turn you over to those who yearn to get their hands on any friend of Rocket's. How would you like to explore the interior of a Chilean dungeon, young Bob?"

"Don't hanker after the experience one bit. Surely you must be jesting, uncle?"

"Did you ever know me to joke?" grimly, and Bob could not remember ever having seen this man laugh over a comical happening. There was too much acid in his composition for that.

He wondered whether it would be the right thing for him to spring upon the other and force his demands. True, the man was old, and possibly less strong than himself, but he felt certain he would have arms on his person, and deem the occasion fitting for resorting to them.

Bob forebore, in which he showed his wisdom, for presently he discovered a small but dangerous looking six-shooter in the other's trembling hand, while the lightnings playing in those crafty and vengeful eyes announced that Silas only asked half a reason for using the toy.

"You can consider yourself a prisoner, sir, in the hands of the military authorities. For a brief time I may be your jailer, and you will show your wisdom by obeying my orders. Turn about face—so, now walk along the passage until you come to a door —that is on the right hand, and you are to enter the delightful apartment prepared for your occupancy. Presently your fate will be decided by General Terencio Vasquez and his advisors. Attempt to escape and you will be shot down, without the least compassion."

Come, this bordered on the tragic; but it It was hard to quench the exuberant spirits of youth, and as Bob looked around at the bare room which lay before him he made out to be offended.

"I didn't think you'd treat one of the family so shabbily, Uncle Silas. And fancy how many miles I've come to see you, too!" he said, reproachfully; but it was like waving a red flag before a mad bull, for the other coddled his peculiar hatred for all that bore the name of Mullane, and the mention of family ties made him gnash his teeth.

"It's too good for you, rascal. Now wait there until the guards come to carry you to

"Have I the pleasure of addressing Senor Mallane?"

your festering dungeon. I've anticipated this hour, and it gives me more satisfaction than I've felt these many years," he said, hoarsely.

"Ah, good-night, uncle," bawled out the prisoner in the other side of the door.

Something like a curse floated back, for Silas was hurrying, lest he be goaded into doing murder by this very high-hearted relative whom he made a guest against his will.

"Well," said Bob, serenely, "I'm here all right, but that's no reason I should stay to meet his illustrious military allies. I don't like this apartment one bit, and I suppose I'm entitled to evacuation act in short order, upon my word."

CHAPTER VI.
A COMMERCIAL ALLY.

While these emotions of Mullane were good, he found more or less difficulty in forcing an exit from prison quarters, since all was the dire fate he had ever found himself shut up against his will; and then again he was unarmed, and had no means to materialize.

Search allowed him to make a survey, and he found the hinges were on the inside, so that with a screw-driver he might have quick access to the door, and forcing an exit.

But where was the tool to come from in this barren apartment?

The spirit of investigation being awakened he prowled around further, noting how abundant means had been employed to barricade the only window, so that it presented an impregnable front.

The only result of his investigations lay in the possession of a rusty and broken table knife, not a thing of beauty or a joy forever, but at the same time offering the prisoner a gleam of hope.

With this rude tool he attacked the screws connected with the hinges.

It was a labor of love, which sorely tried his patience; but with the drawing of each screw he experienced the delights of conquest, and persevered in a manner to prove the indomitable trait of character which he possessed.

It was a proud moment for Bob when the last screw came out in his hand, and he calmly dropped the obstreperous door to the floor.

He trusted that this might prove an augury of future success.

Here he was in that blessed old passage again, and quite ignorant as to the points of the compass; but then he remembered that his father had gone to the right when departing, and considered that he, too, might find the walking in that quarter more agreeable.

After groping his way along for some time, using a match occasionally in order to gain some better insight to his surroundings, Bob discovered that he was drawing near to a light, and at the same time the murmur of voices told him of danger ahead, so that he approached much an after the manner of the Adirondack woods.

It was a pretty scene upon which he gazed when peeping around the corner of the open door. Don Gazaboo was entertaining several men, and the clink of wineglasses told that he knew how to treat his guests well.

First of all Bob sighted Ribocco, pompous as ever, though made a trifle more lordly by the juice of the grape which he was allowing to gurgle down his dusty throat. Besides there were several other officers in uniform, one being a general, to whom the rest appeared to cater as though he might hold the future destinies of all Chile in his hands. And in this individual Bob believed he saw Terencio Vasquez, head of the army, and an aspirant for presidential honors.

It occurred to our young friend that he had dropped in upon a meeting of the revolutionists whom Rocket understood were hatching up a little surprise for the government; for in this day Chile was accustomed to a change in her dynasty about every year.

Mullane was not interested just at this time in political happenings in the republic that had treated him so very shabbily on landing. What concerned him more than all else was the fact that the door of the room chanced to be half open, and that in passing by he must run considerable risk of discovery, if so be one of the occupants looked that way.

They were talking about him, too, for he heard Ribocco swear he would promise to be back in time to see the accursed Yankee pup, if it took him a year, which information Bob digested coolly enough.

He remembered just then that back a few paces he had noticed another door wide open, through which he was lazy to darkness, and the idea flashed into his mind that possibly he might find means of escape there.

It was worth a trial, at any rate, and should only Bob succeed, why, he could return and test his luck in flitting across the open, running the gauntlet of their eyes.

He was instantly feeling along the wall of the darkened apartment for some sort of window that might be utilized under the circumstances, when to his dismay he actually laid his hand on the arm of a man.

The other shrank from his touch a trifle.

Mullane thought fast. Somehow it came upon him that this unknown would not be hiding thus if he belonged to the party making a night of it in the adjoining room. Consequently he must have belongings toward the other side.

That would mean he was friendly with Rocket and his crowd.

He ventured upon a bold bid for information.

"Well, who the deuce are you?" he asked, in a low tone, for neither the time nor the occasion seemed adapted to loud talking.

A hand fell upon his arm, and he had a pretty good idea it had been seeking his throat at the moment the time he spoke.

"Bless my soul, who the de'il can this be?" said a voice, that was plainly Anglo-Saxon to the backbone, though there seemed a trifling ranging burr about it that reminded Bob of the Scotch-Canadians he had met during his outings in the Northern wilderness.

"I asked first, if you please," he insisted, firmly, maintaining his hold of that sleeve.

"So ye did. Aweel, I'm Archibald McFarlane, from auld London, an agent for dissemination of manufactured goods. Now relieve my curiosity," was whispered in his ear.

Bob retaliated in kind, quite carried away with the odd nature of the conversation. He had heard the name mentioned by Colonel Rocket, and somehow fancied the commercial agent must be connected with the fortunes of the adventurer, having more or less interest in the maintaining of the present status so far as the government was concerned.

That is, he thought Mr. McFarlane might be playing the dangerous role of spy for some rival of Rocket.

Upon whispering his suspicions to the other he was met with a hasty denial, the gentleman quite affronted that he should merely followed a German rival to the city, fearing the combination to corner of the legitimate fruits of his canvassing among citizens of the capital.

This was a weakness of the commercial agent—he hated the Germans with a venom that was intensified by the fact that he considered the hand of Bismarck in everything that came to pass.

Even though to Mullane it sounded rather fishy, this excuse for his being in the sanctuary of the illustrious Don Gazaboo, with what concerned him most of all was the opportune offer for escape, and one might be cared the mysterious drummer might have been sent upon meeting off with the elves of the household, so long as he showed him a route to the street.

"If I do better, and accompany you, Mullane," declared the other; "since it appears that Hyer Hands has too many friends to wonder for me to think of taking him to task for his detestable double-dealing. Be pleased to come this way, then, and make as little noise as possible.

Both was satisfied with the way things had turned out.

It was another exhibition of the old motto, "All's providin'," for when things looked darkest the skies might suddenly brighten.

Of course it was a window to which the accommodating drummer led him, and open at that, showing how the other must have forced an entrance to the casa without the formality of knocking at the door.

This caused Bob to make up his mind with regard to the actual status of Archibald McFarlane, who must be hand-in-glove with Rocket, doubtless under the influence of which the other's wits must be wholly resist.

The darkness was such that it must be pretty much guess-work with him in mak-

[Continued on Page Seven.]

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Many a poor fisherman gets tangled up in a string of lies.

Beauty is but skin-deep—and most people are awfully thin-skinned.

Some friends are ungrateful and all are more or less unremunerative.

Onion juice is undoubtedly good for the consumption of those who like it.

The probability is that Atlanta, Ga., will elect a bozoless mayor next time.

A widow's effort to get married is usually more strenuous than her maiden effort.

You would never know how bright some children are if their parents didn't tell you.

President Paul Morton is about to scrape a few more barnacles off the Equitable craft.

Many a man fails to appreciate his happy home because it is happy only during his absence.

St. Louis, having become accustomed to its tie lid, is as proud of it as a dray horse is of its first straw bonnet.

American flour has been hit by the boycott. If the Chinese prefer rats to good bread let them go their way.

Courtship has been compared to strawberries smothered with ice cream and marriage to a beefsteak smothered with onions.

For years some persons have earnestly practiced the theory that the "vegetable juices" of corn are a cure for almost everything.

What fun will it be for Russia to have an election if compulsory orators are not allowed to tell the truth under penalty of a trip to Siberia?

Fortunately the President's trip in the Plunger was not advertised in advance, so that Wall street was spared the fit it otherwise would have had.

Tom Lawson is going to hammer copper. We don't know what shape he is going to hammer it into, but he has thrown out some strong hints concerning a cocked hat.

General Corbin's daughter has been adopted by a tribe of Indians and elevated to the rank of princess. It's cheaper than getting married to a foreigner and may, in the end, be more pleasant.

TITLES FOR SALE;

OR

WHEN PRINCES COME TO WOO.

BY ADRIENNE ROUCOLLE.

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Begun in No. 38, Sept. 2. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER XIII.

JULIET AND CAMILLA.

When Juliet told her brother of the plan Barton and she had formed to save his happiness and give him the woman he loved, he was overjoyed, for with the enthusiasm of youth he saw no cause to fear that the plan would not mature to his satisfaction.

"How can I thank you, Juliet? I will love my happiness to you," he said when she had told him.

"Wait until you are married before you thank me; there are many slips between the cup and the lip; besides, don't rejoice so soon, Camilla has not given her consent and it is on that consent that the whole plan hinges."

"But she would surely not refuse. It is her happiness as well as mine that is at stake. She loves me, Juliet, she told me so and—"

But Juliet cut him short with the words:

"True, it is to her advantage to accept, but to a timid nature like hers the thought of a secret marriage, without her parents' consent will be appalling. In truth, it is rather a compliment to you to do, and you would find many who would refuse to expose themselves to the comments which follow such a marriage."

"It is a case of necessity this time and——"

"I know, I know, but at this point I will try to make Camilla understand. Do not fear, I will do my best and if she refuses it will be through no fault or mine. Now for a cup of tea and a light lunch. Then I will dress for the ball and leave you to your honeymoon and——"

But Juliet was mistaken in the point of her guess, for Camilla was silent, for the coming and going of the servant gave them no chance to speak of the subject which interested them, and they were in no mood to speak of anything else, and their thoughts were busy thinking out all the arguments she would use to win to her way of thinking the vacillating girl with which she would have to contend. With all the ardor of her impulsive nature she threw herself heart and soul into the scheme, momentarily forgetting all else on the prince and her love for him, in the preoccupation of the moment.

Her elder that evening took less time than usual, for she hurried her maid, reminding her that she had to dress Camilla as were her preparations, she found Rupert waiting for her. He finished toward her a look of approving admiration as he saw her enter. She was truly charming that night.

The gown, whose low cut displayed the rounded perfection of her neck and shoulders, trailed in airy, graceful folds about her, while the soft shell-pink tint of the chiffon harmonized with the white and luminous blue-gray eyes. Besides, her cheeks were unusually flushed, her eyes more brilliant than ever. In a word she was a woman who could well hold her own, even among the beauties who that night would throng Mr. Taylor's parlors.

She did not give Rupert time to express his admiration, for she asked, in nervous, hurried tones so unlike her usual, dreamy accents:

"The carriage is ready, of course?"

"Certainly, it is at the door," he answered as he wrapped her sortie-de-bal around her bare shoulders, "and I will be ready in a second—just my hat and overcoat."

She did not wait for him, but walked alone to the carriage, and when he rejoined her she gave this order to the coachman:

"The Taylor residence, hurry."

The distance was short and they soon alighted before the Taylor mansion, which that name of "cottage" did seem small and insignificant before the imposing, resplendent, entirely luminous white marble facade stairs they now walked. But in Newport all residences go under the name of cottages, though some cost only a few thousand while others run into millions.

To the liveried servant who answered their summons Juliet said:

"Kindly have my card carried to Miss Taylor' room, she is expecting me."

The man bowed, and while his sister was mounting the stairs to the apartments above, Rupert was saying:

"I wish to see Mr. Taylor if he is at liberty. Where may I find him?"

"Mr. Taylor is in the library. He has just descended," was the reply, as the valet showed the way.

Meanwhile Juliet had been shown to Camilla's apartment. She found her friend dressed for the ball. Her gown, a ravishing creation of blue crepon and white lace, would have brought satisfaction to most women's hearts, but not so to Camilla. She was in her boudoir, seated disconsolately on a divan, idly fingering a large bouquet of white orchids, an expression of trouble, almost sorrow, marring the childlike beauty of her face. She looked up languidly when some one knocked at the door, and in a tired voice said:

"Come in."

But when she saw who entered she rose hastily and hurried to her friend, saying:

"How kind of you, Juliet, to come so early. I have need of your presence to give me courage to bear the trials of the evening, for I dread this evening. I hate my duties as hostess, having to be pleasant with so many people I don't like."

"Even with Baron von Cottendorf eh, Camilla?" said Juliet, as she took off her wraps.

"Yes, even with him, nay, more with him than others, for he has my father's protection," her last words had a bitter ring.

Juliet led Camilla back to her seat, then said with tender sympathy in her tones:

"My poor Camilla, I fear you will have to marry that count before after all. Your father, I see, is determined to have him for a son-in-law."

The dart took effect, for Camilla shivered and paled and there was an unsteady ring in her voice as she answered:

"Juliet, I think it would kill me if I had to marry him. He is so fat and bloody and we have not one taste in common. Life with him would be a ceaseless torture. Besides, I already love—love—I could not love him, for—perhaps you have already guessed my secret—I have been engaged for the last six months."

"Yes, I have guessed it this afternoon. That is the reason I came so early, for I wished to explain to you the details of a plan we have formed to save you from the horrid baron and put you forever out of his reach."

"Oh, what is that plan?" was the eager response.

Juliet could not answer, for Georgina burst into the room, saying almost before she had entered:

"Oh, Camilla, is it really so that I will not be at your ball next week? Mrs. Fleming just told me it wasn't proper as long as I wasn't introduced. I call that real mean when you promised to be my friend and——"

She looked so rapidly that neither of her listeners could reply to her first question. Then at last she paused, Juliet said:

"Mrs. Fleming is right. It is not considered just the thing for a schoolgirl, but as we are friends we may not have to be so formal as in New York. Better go to your father, dear, and have him decide. He may give you permission. Run down and ask him before the guests begin to arrive."

Georgina did not have to be told twice, for she was out of the room in the same rapidity as she had entered it, leaving the door open as she went. Juliet rose, closed it, then, turning back to Camilla, said:

"This interruption shows me I must hurry. Camilla, you must meet Rupert without delay, tomorrow afternoon, Uncle Sam says."

"But my father won't consent."

"I know that, but we will have to do what Uncle Sam says, of course," and rapidly and clearly Juliet explained to her trembling companion the scheme and the details with which Barton had embellished it. For awhile after Juliet ceased speaking Camilla sat in silence, then, impulsively, exclaimed aloud her thought:

"Juliet, I ever dare to do such a thing. What would my father say? I would be afraid, also, the newspapers would take up the matter throughout the length and breadth of the United States I would be spoken of and commented upon in drawing and parlor, in city mansions and humble farm houses. No, the notoriety would kill me, Juliet. I was not made for the intrigues of life. I can't bear the responsibility and such a decision."

"Camilla, it is for you to choose between the nine-days' wonder of a secret marriage in which you would figure as the heroine and not as the victim, or a life of misery, of continual strife, as the wife of a man you hate, and whom no true woman could ever learn to love. You have to be the bridge upon as the girl who married the man she loved in spite of an ambitious father, or as the fool who sold herself to a hideous monster because he happened to be called a prince. Camilla, you must make the matter what you do, you will be talked about. Whether you marry Rupert Barton or the Baron von Cottendrof you will be the object of newspaper comments, your name will be bandied about in the mouth of the city or on the farm, at the village grocery or in the kitchen, we care little to our modern papers who do not know how to respect the sanctity of home life. In one case the comment which would surely follow the rending will be that you are a sensible, patriotic American girl who prefers love to the title of a fortune-hunter, while should you marry the baron they would say with sincere disgust: 'Another fool whose head has been turned by the pain gutter of a palace!'"

Camilla listened in silence and on her face Juliet sought to read her thoughts. The quiver of her weak lips, the yielding expression in the eyes, showed her that she was making an impression, so she continued without giving Camilla time to analyze her feelings.

"Camilla, think well before you come to a decision, for it is the happiness of your life which is at stake. The baron can't and won't make you happy, he will not even try to, for he does not love you any more than you do him. He is here for money and your father is fool enough to offer him a large sum in exchange for the empty honor of having a son-in-law in the nobility. With Rupert it will be love, sincere and true. It cannot be anything else, for he is rich and does not need your gold and is good-looking enough to have almost any girl he would choose to ask; but as it is, he happens to want you and only you, so why ruin his life while towering ambition to the most bitter lot a woman could have?"

Juliet spoke long in the same strain, answering all of Camilla's arguments with conclusive answers. It was much harder to win the consent of a firm will, but a good deal safer when won. With Camilla, Juliet felt that she could never be sure of her promise, for a given word would count for little before the sickly fear of that weak heart. At last Camilla said:

"Juliet, I will make one last effort by appealing to my father's feelings, him of my love for Rupert and my engagement to him, and beg him to have mercy and let me have the man I love. If he refuses, then I promise you that I will do your will. Tomorrow afternoon I will marry your brother."

Juliet would have offered other arguments, but Georgina burst into the room for a second time, saying, as she danced herself gaily about the room:

"Papa says I may dance, and, Camilla, he wants you to descend at once to the library, for he wishes to see you there without a moment's delay."

Camilla arose, but Juliet murmured in her ear:

"Whatever you do, don't betray our plan."

Camilla nodded and with a highly beating heart descended to her father.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FATHER AND THE LOVER.

While Juliet was defending his interests with Camilla and winning from her a conditional promise, Rupert was engaging welfare with the redoubtable father. He found Mr. Taylor in the library already dressed for the ball, a white orchard in his buttonhole, his handsome, dyed, waxed and curled like that of the German Emperor, his scant hair so arranged as to conceal the bald spot which was rapidly making a most important part on his head.

Mr. Taylor was a man of fifty, but business cares, that breathless chase for millions, the exciting life of Wall street, had aged him before his time. Only the keen eye of his pitiful attempts to hide the ravages of years and work, he could easily have passed for sixty. There was a hardness on his face, a blue cold steely blue of the eyes, in the massive chin, which marked him out as a man of few affections and no mercy. He took no stock in the true love of his life. Then came the honors which his god bestowed on him, for he was as good as he was selfish, not an unusual combination.

He had no sympathy for the poor, or respect for the lowly, and if ever his name figured for a large sum at the head of some

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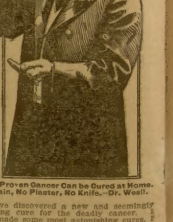

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charitable object, it was through pride, not through any kindly sentiment. He treated his servants and inferiors with hauteur, but to those who for any reason were above him in the social scale, he toadied to them with the servile obsequiousness of his inferior nature.

His wife, an excellent woman who had loved him deeply, had died three years before. He had given her one of the most costly funerals, had erected over her tomb the finest monument which money could buy, but he had not shed over her one sincere tear of regret. She was no longer as young as she might be, and somewhat old-fashioned, and it would be an easy matter to find a handsome, fashionable and youthful woman to take her place.

When the foreigners arrived in New York he at once concluded that Camilla must capture at least one of them. Nothing was spared to that effect, princely receptions, magnificent balls, sumptuous dinners were given at their home in his New York mansion, and now at Newport the festivities continued, the fortune was spent on Camilla's wardrobe and in spite of her protests she was made to parade before the newcomers, seeking to blind them with the glitter of his millions and the rather vulgar display these millions could bring.

Tonight Taylor was brimming over with satisfaction. His object was achieved, since she accepted the Baron von Cottendorf, had asked him for his daughter's hand, thus making Camilla Rupert's soon-in-law of a baron. True, in the depth of his soul he was a little disappointed. Camilla had not done as well as she might; there had been a prince, a count, and a baron in marriage and she had succeeded in only capturing the one with the insignificant title. True, she was the wife of a baron, and that alone would attract them, instead her coldness repelled them at once.

"The little minx didn't try," he would often repeat to himself, and in consequence the slight cloud which he had felt for his daughter had vanished and he was ready to favor her in every way with Baron von Cottendorf whether she would or not.

When Rupert entered he was seated on a huge leather divan, pleasantly looking at his reflection in the mirror which faced him. He still had designs on one or a young woman for was he not a widower and did he not wish a young, handsome and wealthy bride? His gentlemanly friend missed him this evening, since his valet had even more exacting claims than usual in enhancing the signs of age from his face. He felt himself quite youthful, and as he saw Rupert Hemsley enter the room a frown marred the smoothness of his brow. Instinctively he felt that the news that Camilla would not had not seconded his plans, so there was nothing cordial in the greeting as he answered Rupert's pleasant "Good-evening, Mr. Taylor," with a cold nod of the words.

"What can I do for you, sir?"

Rupert bit his lips. The coldness of his tones and the formality of the address nettling him to the quick. Besides it showed him what his future father-in-law's views of his legs solitol. Yet faithful to the task he had imposed upon himself, he said, advancing a few steps into the room:

"You can do much for me, sir, since you can make me happy by the happiness of my life."

Mr. Taylor coughed uneasily. He guessed to what Rupert referred, and was preparing his answer. Still he did not ask the young man to take a seat. But Rupert continued:

"Mr. Taylor, I have long loved your daughter, and for the last six months I have the honor of having won her consent to marry me, if you consent."

Mr. Taylor leaped to his feet:

"What! do you say that you are engaged to marry my daughter? That—" He could not finish, choked as he was with anger.

"Yes, sir," answered Rupert, as calm as the other was excited. "And tonight I have the honor to ask you for her hand in marriage."

Taylor walked about the room the prey to a sudden fury. That was the reason of Camilla's avoidance to his wishes, here was the cause of her coldness to the nobleman he had chosen for her consort, and that was the reason she had only won a baron when it might have been a count or a prince. In spite of the polish of the millionaire vanished and he took on the rudeness of his ancient ancestors as he exclaimed:

"I refuse to give you that hand, sir! What have you to give in exchange for that honor? Nothing but money, and that we have got from you. What were your ancestors—what were they? Simple merchants who sold cloth while their wares, then mounting the social scale became bankers, and from bankers became millionaires! And you, Rupert Bencroft? One of a thousand, with nothing distinguished about you, and your grandfather a hundred years ago was unknown as far as the world was concerned."

Angered by the man's taunting words, Rupert forgot the promise he had made himself to remain calm. He said, with mocking contempt expressed in his tone and mien:

"My name, sir, is as noble and as old as yours, and, if I have been correctly informed, of a far more distinguished one."

Taylor bounded toward him with an oath, and, pointing to the door, cried:

"Out of my presence, sir! Leave the room at once. I will not stand by and allow my family name to be insulted by such as you. No, I will not consent to your marrying my daughter. I have already promised her hand to one who, though the bearer of an illustrious name, does not scorn to unite himself to a family like mine, no matter what you may say to the contrary."

Rupert already repented his hasty words, but it was too late to retract them, so he tried to excuse them as best he could, saying:

"Pardon my impertinent remark. It escaped me without my wishing it, but you had insulted my own family record. It was human nature to return the compliment."

"Very well, I accept your excuses," said Mr. Taylor, with a generous gesture, somewhat glad at these excuses since he did not want to become Rupert's enemy, was not fullet about to become a princess, therefore one more enough knowing." "I have already told you why I cannot accept your offer. My word is already given to Baron von Cottendorf, who last night did us the honor to ask for Camilla's hand."

"Then your daughter, sir, knew me, she—"

"Tu, ta, ta! a schoolgirl's romance, my boy. It will soon pass. As to you, in six weeks' time you will thank me for having given your conversation with me this evening. I will forget your words, you people run passionate today and forgotten tomorrow."

Rupert felt there was no need to plead any further; besides, he thought he had sacrificed his pride enough and that he would have nothing with which to reproach himself tomorrow when he would marry Camilla in spite of her father.

"I see there is nothing more for me to do, then, save to bid you good-evening and leave the house, sorry to have proved having refused me tonight."

"Yes, I regret it, too, but I left the room before Mr. Taylor had time to say another word. But instead of leaving the house he had walked leisurely toward the conservatory and took a seat behind some palm trees, where Baron von Cottendorf found Camilla to come and tell him of the decision of her father. Rupert, thinking it unnecessary to send her to him that he might complete the work she had begun, winning that weak will to so dastardly.

CHAPTER XV.

GEORGINA.

When Rupert Bencroft had left him, Mr. Taylor paced nervously throughout the vast room. He was not angry with Rupert because he felt he had been unnecessarily insulting, but was angry with himself for the arrival of the Baron Von Cottendorf, would have been considered, even by himself, as ridiculous, as he walked he muttered half aloud:

"Yes, I acted for the best. Between Baron von Cottendorf and young Bencroft there was no possibility for hesitation to any sensible mind. The one was a nobleman of purest blue blood of Europe. He is a friend of the Emperor William, and moreover he has claims a distant relationship. He has castles, titles and estates in Germany as well. He is received by the most exclusive families of Europe! Such men become the families of Europe! Such men become the families of Europe! Such men become the

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JOKES AND

Real Melters.

"Warmth and softness will never melt a girl's heart," sighed the young man who had tried to make an impression on a young lady by saying sweet things.

"I should say not," replied the chap who had been jilted and learned by experience, "it is hardness and coldness that melts their hearts—diamonds and ice cream."

Farewell to Summer

Ol' Summeh says in deze two weeks
He'll pack his grip en go;
Jack Frost he paint de pumpkin cheeks,
How cool de night wind blow!
Deep crimson is de sumac lan'
Ah heah dat jaybird call,
Somebody ketch me by de han'—
Why, howdy, Misteh Fall.

NOT WHAT SHE MEANT.

She—That's my mamma in black behind us. She has her eye on you.
He—O, I'm not at all surprised. It would astonish you how many widows have picked me out for Number Two.

Arbitration Indefinitely Postponed.

Miss Goodley—Bess says she'll ready to make up if you are.

Miss Cutting—Tell her I'd be ready to make up, too, if I had a complexion as muddy as hers.

First He Had Heard of It.

Mrs. Chugwater—Have you seen what the papers say about this cricket pest?

Mr. Chugwater—No. For heaven's sake, is that starting up again? I thought baseball had killed it off.

The Tyke's Caretaker—He'll not hurt you, his bark's worse than his bite.
The Chap on the Wall—Snakes! Then I hope he won't bark, for I've just sampled his bite!

AT THE PARSONAGE

Coffee Runs Riot No Longer.

"Wife and I had a serious time of it while we were coffee drinkers.

"She had gastritis, headaches, belching and would have periods of sickness while I secured a daily headache that became chronic.

"We naturally sought relief by drugs and without avail, for it is now plain enough that no drug will cure the diseases another drug, coffee, sets up particularly, so long as the drug which causes the trouble is continued.

"Finally we thought we would try leaving off coffee and using Postum. I noticed that my headaches disappeared like magic and my old 'crankiness' was found to my astonishment that numbers of them use Postum in place of coffee. Many of the ministers who have visited our parsonage have become enthusiastic champions of Postum. Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

"There's a reason."

Read the little book, "The Road to Wellville" in each pkg.

Flanking Strategy.

A regiment of soldiers was drawn up for church parade in the barrack square, but the church was being repaired and could only hold half of them.

"Sergeant major," shouted the colonel, "tell all the men who do not want to go to church to fall out on the reverse flank."

Of course, a large number quickly and gladly availed themselves of the privilege.

"Now, sergeant major," said the colonel, "dismiss all the men who did not fall out, and march the others to church—they need it most."

Got What He Asked For.

"Say," queried the alleged funny man, as he entered the butcher shop "what's pork worth a yard?"

"Fifty cents," answered the butcher.

"Well, I'll take a yard," said the A. F. M., tossing a half-dollar on the counter.

The butcher pocketed the coin and handed the customer three pig's feet.

"Say, what are you giving me?" asked the party of the funny part, indignantly.

"A yard of pork—just what you asked for," replied the butcher. "Three feet make a yard, you know."

Even Then.

Just then the ark came very near turning turtle.

"What on earth caused the commotion?" gasped Mrs. Noah. "Earthquake under the water?"

"No," replied Noah, "one of the elephants just slipped a peanut floating by and made a lunge for it."

Which all goes to show it is always best to take a bag of peanuts along wherever one goes.

No Mercy.

When the fool-killer came to the man who rocks the boat he was determined to mete out severe punishment.

"Are you going to kill him?" asked the friend.

"No," replied the fool-killer, "that would be too lenient. I am going to make him marry a modern club woman so he will be doomed to rock the boat when she goes out."

In the Market.

Eva Richly—Oh, I really don't think the count is marrying me for my money. There seems to be a bond of sympathy between us.

Edna Slinck—Then it must be a gold bond.

Inexcusable Ignorance.

Green—I bet ten dollars on the favorite in a horse race yesterday and lost.

Brown—What was the name of the horse?

Green—Regulator.

Brown—Huh! You might have known that all other horses would go by him.

Family Trait.

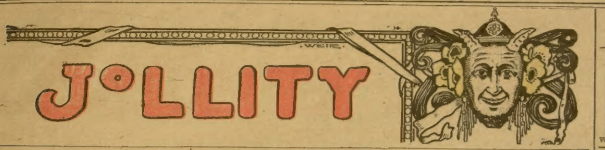
Mrs. Mifkins—Our little Mabel is the brightest child you ever saw. She picks up everything she hears.

Mrs. Bifkins—Something like your little Johnny, I suppose. He picks up everything he sees.

Strenuous Hint.

Husband—Let me see, how long has it been since Uncle John was here?

Wife—Oh, it must be several years. He was here the week after I got my last new bonnet.



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Native—Physically speaking, yes.

Stranger—Physically speaking?

Native—Yes; otherwise he is short—something like $50,000. That's why he has taken a trip abroad.

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He wrote off a sonnet
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And her praises were cordial and bland:
For the check from that sonnet
Bought her Easter bonnet,
And that's why she said it was grand.

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An Unpleasant Outlook.

She—Clarence, just think of it! Five weeks from today, and we will be married.

He—Well, let's be happy while we may.

As Others See Us.

"Bwains will tell, doncher know," said young Sapleigh.

"Then there is no danger of your ever betraying a secret," rejoined Miss Cutting.

Cause and Effect.

Bess—Were you angry because he kissed you?

Nell—No; but I was when he apologized for it later.

The Daughter—I don't know what to do about Cholly Staylate.

Her Mamma—What's the matter?

The Daughter—You object to his shortcomings, and papa objects to his late stayings.

Final.

He—But why won't you come canoeing with me?

She—Well, because I can't breathe under water, for one thing!

Elevated.

Mrs. Crawford—That thar city gal lost one of her high French heels in the road. Old Uncle Weatherby found it.

Mr. Crawfoot—What did he do with it?

Mrs. Crawfoot—Why, he went up to the city gal and said: "Pardon me, Miss, but you've lost one of your stilts."

Beggar—Won't you give me a nickel, lady? I'm almost starving.

Kind Lady—My, my! starving? Certainly I'll help you. Can you change a five dollar bill?

Beggar (absently)—Oh, yes, ma'am—yes, ma'am!

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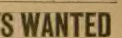

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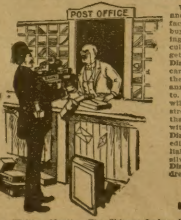

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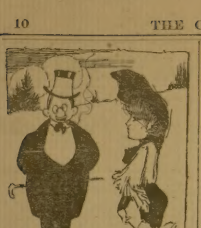


She—Why, yes, you may call on me, but you must remember that papa insists that the lights must be out at 10.

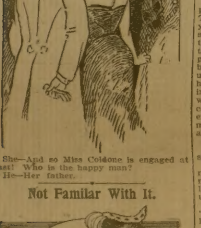
He—Then I'll call at 10:5.

Happy Days.

She—And so Miss Coldone is engaged at last! Who is the happy man?

He—Her father.

Not Familiar With It.



Actress—I used to play in Bast Lynne.

Manager—Never heard of it. Have you played in Westchester?

Hustler.

Mrs. Fling—But that Mrs. Spriggs is no idle gossip, is she?

Mrs. Sting—I should say not. Her gossiping keeps her busy from sun to sun.

A Let-Up All Around.

Citizen—Don't you get any vacation?

Office Boy—Gee, it rests de whole office when de boss goes off.

HER ANGEL FACE;

Or, The Story of Felicia - - - - By Emma Howard Wight.

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CHAPTER XVI.

It was Saturday afternoon and the minister had gone to his study to prepare his sermon for the next day. He had just seated himself at his desk when the maid entered.

"I beg your pardon, sir," she said, "but there's a woman outside who insists upon seeing you. I told her you were very busy and she had better call again; but she said no—she must see you now."

"Do you know who the woman is, Mary?" inquired the minister.

"No, sir," replied the girl. "I have never seen her before."

"Well, I suppose I had better see her. You can show her in, Mary."

He arose from his desk and went to the window. He stood looking out until the closing of the door caused him to turn.

A woman, standing just beyond the threshold, met his startled gaze with an evil smile.

"I see you ain't forgot me, Mr. Arnold," she said.

His face had grown very pale.

"No, I have not forgotten you," he replied, slowly. He suppressed a shudder. The thing he had dreaded all those years had come at last. Then he drew himself together and fixed his eyes sternly upon the woman. "What was to be expected on the dearest thing on earth to him—Felicia's peace. "I have seen you before, madam, but I remember you perfectly," he continued. "Your name is Barton." Involuntarily his voice sank lower. "You are the sister-in-law of the woman, Rachel Barton, who was hanged for murder. You are the self-condemned woman's call the day before her execution that I saw you. You see, I remember you quite well; and now may I ask what you business with me is?"

The tone upon which he deepened.

"My business ain't so much with you," she replied. "It's with your niece, Felicia."

"I cannot allow you to hold any communication with Miss Barton," said the minister. "She knows nothing of her relationship to you, nothing, in fact, of her unfortunate parentage."

"So I supposed," remarked the woman. "But there ain't nothing to prevent my enlightening her, I reckon."

A red stain flashed across the pallor of the minister's face. With clenched hands he made an involuntary movement toward the woman. "I shall not permit it!" he said. His voice seized him; to silence forever the cruel lips that would blast Felicia's peace.

Mag Barton laughed.

"I don't believe you'd like to murder me, minister though you are," she said.

The minister's clenched hands relaxed, the crimson faded from his face, his form fell weak almost faint. The woman moved a little nearer to him.

"I told you I'd be even with you some day," she continued, "and I meant it. I lost track of you after they done for Rachel and it was only by accident that I found you at last. I've a-looking that long time for the girl. I seen her picture that's on exhibition in New York, and she's very beautiful; there ain't no denyin' that. I reckon I can make you suffer through her."

An unspeakably evil smile flooded the minister's lips.

"That is very true," he said. "You can make me suffer through her." As he spoke there flashed mockingly through his mind the words he had spoken to his mother when he brought the child to her, "She looks as though she were born to live always in the sunshine and among the flowers, so she shall be called Felicia which means happiness." He walked down and up down the room, and then paused beside the woman. "You will not be so cruel as to blight her life simply to make me suffer," he continued. "Allowing that you have a grievance against me, she has never done you wrong. She has never wronged any human creature even by a thought. If you have a woman's heart in your breast you will spare her."

"Why should I spare her? What does it matter to me that she is unhappy?" cried the woman, roughly. "It's her she's my own flesh and blood, though nobody'd know it to look at her," with a sneer, "but she wouldn't as much as let her skirts touch mine in passing; I hate 'em all—your good women as shrinks from us poor sinful ones as though I was poison! I hate her, too! I wonder what them there aristocrats in New York are making such a fuss over her picture would think if they knowed that she was the child of a murderess who paid the penalty of her crime upon the gallows."

The minister gave a frightened look about him and then extended his hands with an imploring gesture.

"For Heaven's sake, be quiet!" he cried. "If you will go away and promise never to seek Felicia again I will give you money—any sum within reason that you may demand."

Again the woman laughed her mocking laugh.

"It's not money I want now, it's revenge," she replied. "I didn't come here to blackmail you, so you can't buy my silence, no, not if you had thousands of dollars to do it with. Why shouldn't she have her share of suffering same as other women? And no doubt she'll get used to it in time. I mean knowin' the truth about herself."

"Yet used to it," murmured the minister, hopelessly. "Such a knowledge will break her heart, overwhelm her with horror, perhaps kill her. It is utterly impossible for you to understand a nature like Felicia's—you who are unfit even to take her name upon your lips. Oh, my God! to think that her peace should be at the mercy of a thing so cruel, pitiless and depraved, and that I, who would die to shield her from suffering, am powerless."

"Ah! I see," said the woman, "tain't exactly father's love that you have for her. Well, I reckon she'll be glad enough to marry you when she knows the truth. It ain't every man as would marry the daughter of a murderess, no matter how good and beautiful she might be. They'd be afeared of the bad blood showin' some day. Now I think we've wasted enough time. If you won't send for the gal I reckon I can manage to find her."

She turned abruptly. The study door had opened and Felicia stood upon the threshold.

The minister and Mag Barton stood paralyzed at her silence.

A golden gleam from the setting sun stole in at the window and lay across her white gown. That, together with the pale gold of her hair and the crimson flush of the red roses on her breast, were the only touches of color about her.

She was the first to speak.

"I beg your pardon, Douglas," she said, "I did not know you were engaged."

The minister lifted a trembling hand and wiped the cold sweat which had gathered upon his brow. He turned his eyes upon Mag Barton. Her eyes were fixed upon Felicia, who suddenly as the color went out of her face, leaving her very lips bloodless. She clutched out blindly at the fell back into the chair by which she stood. Then Douglas Arnold was by her side. She bent over the woman and drew the swaying head to her breast.

"Oh, Douglas!" she cried, looking across at the minister, "the poor woman is ill!"

She did not guess, he did not mean. An absorbing fascination held him, his eyes upon the face resting in Felicia's arms, with its rough, gray-streaked hair and cheap, flashy hat, rested upon Felicia's brow, crushed beneath which fell light drops of blood upon the woman's shoulder. And the contrast between the two was great. The coarse, depraved one of the woman, the pure, beautiful one of the girl. And the minister shudderingly traced a subtle resemblance between them.

The woman's eyes slowly opened and rested upon the fair face bending over her. Then, with a mocking laugh, "I am a subject to these here spells; it's my heart, the doctors say."

"Let me get you a glass of wine," said Felicia.

"No, I don't want nothing," was the reply.

She lifted her head from Felicia's breast and sat upright. Her face had lost something of its doubtful pallor, but was still very pale.

"I'll go now," she muttered, as she rose slowly to her feet.

The minister's heart beat wildly.

"Are you sure that you feel enough?" asked Felicia.

She shook the brief answer.

She moved slowly across the room. It seemed to us long, long time to the minister before she reached the door. Then on the threshold she hesitated and glanced back at Felicia, standing beside him, then she passed out.

"Poor woman! she seemed very ill for a few moments," said Felicia. "I wish I could think I have ever seen her about here before, Douglas."

"No," he murmured, and sat down at his desk. He felt very faint and trembling.

"Auntie is taking tea at the Lortons, Douglas," added Felicia. "I was to tell you I'd come back to you at once. Now I will go and see about our tea," and she left the room.

With something very like a sob the minister buried his face in his hands.

Some hours later Felicia and her mother entered the parsonage the maid handed Mrs. Arnold a note.

"Miss Felicia left this for you, ma'am," she said.

The minister's face turned very white as he read the few lines the note contained.

"Douglas, the woman who called to see Douglas this afternoon is dying at Ede's Hotel and has sent for me to come to her. I cannot refuse, as she she should wish to see me, but I cannot refuse a dying request. Please tell Douglas to come for me.

"FELICIA."

"Douglas, how strangely you look! What is it?" cried Mrs. Arnold.

As briefly as possible he told her all, adding:

"This may simply be a subterfuge on that woman's part, or, if she is indeed dying, she will not forget Felicia all. I am going now to bring Felicia home. She is in sore need of all the love, tenderness and succor that you can afford her."

"Go to her, Douglas," said Mrs. Arnold. "It is awful to think of her having to meet that terrible hour alone. Go; bring her home to me, my poor Felicia."

Ede's Hotel, a second-rate establishment, was at the further end of the town from the parsonage. So long as he lived Douglas Arnold forgot the torturing suspense of the time spent in reaching his destination.

While he longed intensely to reach Felicia he shrank in dread from that which the first glance into her face might reveal.

"Yes, the woman was dying and the young lady was with her," they told him when he reached the hotel. "The woman had arrived at the hotel about 7 o'clock and asked for a room. The chambermaid had gone into the room a little later and found her very ill. A doctor had been sent for. He said the woman had heart disease and was dying. When she was told she asked them to send for Miss Barton at the Episcopal parsonage. The young lady had been with her ever since."

At that moment Felicia came into the office. One glance at her face and a long sigh of infinite relief and a prayer of thanksgiving left the minister's lips.

"My God, I thank Thee!"

"I am ready to return with you, Douglas," she said. "The poor woman is dead."

He wrapped about her the light shawl he had brought and led her from the house. He did not speak until they were some distance from the hotel, then he said gently:

"Tell me, dear, what did she want, desire of you?"

"She had to tell you all about it, Douglas," she replied. "It is very strange. When I entered the room where that woman lay—I do not even know her name—she turned to me with such an eager, strange look on her face, as if I were the one she would come," she murmured. "I am sorry to find you ill again," I said. "What can I do for you?" "You can," she answered and happy the last few minutes of a life that has been of misery to others and to herself," she replied. "Listen! This evening at the parsonage you may be bewildered upon what ground, though you must have felt that I was a creature from whom all pure women would shrink. But you cannot, for you said I was in need of pity and help and you gave them. Ah, I have been all evil and sin. I am not worthy to kiss your feet; but I am dying, and death will be sweeter than anything I have known in life if you will take my head upon your breast and kiss me once." Her words and her face were so pure, too spotless for my touch to taint you, that I felt the sinful and wrecked—I stronger in your heart than the cold women, the world gives to such as me. If my request seems strange to you, just treat it as the outcome of the longing of one poor sinful woman for the touch of something pure, unstained; for the gentle pity of a sister-woman." And, oh, Douglas, I shall never forget the look upon her face or voice fact when I lifted her head upon my breast and pressed my lips upon her forehead. It brought the tears to my eyes. She looked at me, my face, smiled, and in a little while she was dead."

She paused.

The minister's face, in a silent prayer, was uplifted to the star-lit heavens.

CHAPTER XVII.

It was the anniversary of the saddest day in the life of Walter Orme. It was also the night of Irene's ball, and the brilliantly lighted house, the flower-decked rooms, the grounds with their colored lights, seemed to him veriest mockery. His entire thoughts were of his young wife, who nineteen years ago that very night gave her life for his child, and upon whose grave the white roses he had placed there that morning were fading. The somber look in his eyes contradicted the forced smile on his lips as he greeted the fashionable throng of guests.

Rose looked charming in a creamy silk, trimmed with soft laces, with pink roses twined in her soft gold curls. Her pretty neck and shoulders were white as the purest flower. Her father's birthday gift, a necklace of rare pink pearls, was about her throat.

Dr. Carter, whose hair was white, but whose tall form was still strong and erect, looked down upon her with a tender smile of his grave brown eyes.

"Oh, father, the fête of you to come!" she cried. She was very fond of the doctor.

"Why, certainly I had to come to do honor to my granddaughter on her birthday."

Orme stood beside his daughter, pale and silent. Neither spoke to the host of each other. Both were thinking of that day, nineteen years before, when Louise Orme died and left behind her darling infant in the pink and gold boudoir. Never by look or word during the years that had followed had either given a hint of the awful secret which lay between them.

Cecil Warrington and Percy Bedell had arrived in Cambridge that morning. They were rather late reaching Orme Court. As Warrington bent his dark head over Rose's hand, she glanced archly up into his face and whispered:

"Felicia is in the conservatory."

"Thank you," he said, gravely.

He soon found Felicia, and at the first sight of her he stopped spellbound. She was standing beside a fountain which tossed high into the air glittering sprays of water, tinted from the colored lights. She wore a filmy gown, a shimmering pale green in color; her hair was bound with a wreath of arbutus; her shoulders and arms were bare and their pearly loveliness was bewildering. Just behind her was a great mass of scarlet bloom.

She stood with her eyes fixed pensively upon the glittering waters. The hot blood rushed into Warrington's dark cheek as he stood gazing upon her. Then he went up to her. She started slightly and, for the

first time, he saw in her lovely eyes a faint shade of self-consciousness.

"Did I startle you?" he asked, as he took her hand gently in his.

"A little," she replied, with a faint smile. "The flowers and the perfume act almost like a narcotic. It is so lovely here. I do not dance, you know, and the ballroom does not attract me."

"You look wondrously lovely," he said. "You must not mind my telling you so," as she flushed. "I have never seen you dressed like that before."

She paused for a moment. His pulses were leaping and his heart beat quickly.

"Felicia," his voice was tremulous and his face whitened, "do you not know that I love you? I loved you from the first moment my eyes rested upon you that first Christmas morning. Again and again have the words I am speaking now risked to my lips, but the time never seemed ripe. I feared they would freeze them upon my lips. But I can keep silent no longer. Felicia, do you care for me? Do you love me?"

"I do not know," she faltered. "I like you very much, but I do not think it is love."

"You have never thought of me in the light of a lover," he said. "You do not know how you hear, I will not press you now. Take a month to become accustomed to the thought. Remember, Felicia, my every hope of peace in my life's happiness, are in your hand."

She looked up at him with troubled eyes. Her face was pale.

"Do not say more now," she said. "And I think I would like to go home."

"I am sorry that I have spoiled your first ball for you," he said. "I have been selfish. I should not have spoken."

"It does not matter," she replied, with a wan smile. "I am not made for scenes like this. I find no pleasure in them."

He looked at her, wonder in his tenderness. He would soon teach her differently once she was his wife. Will and power to her loveliness would [illegible] cultured talents. He [illegible] ability to win her. She was only a woman, [illegible] him.

And Felicia drew a long sigh of relief as the carriage bore her away from the lights and music and [illegible] She had longed, as she had never longed before, for the calm, the peace of home. She never even looked back at her tall, handsome lover as he stood on the steps with uncovered head until the carriage was out of sight. She was wondering if Douglas would have retired when she reached the parsonage, for a sudden yearning had come upon her for the sight of his face and the sound of his voice. For the first time the calm serenity of her life was broken, she felt troubled, restless. Could Dougl[illegible] help her? Douglas, who had always shielded her from the faintest shadow of pain.

Cecil Warrington returned to the ballroom and went in search of Rose. He found her surrounded by a coterie of admirers: Bedell, sulky and jealous, was one of the number.

"I think this is my waltz, Miss Orme," said Warrington, and she arose and took his arm. "Miss Barton has gone home," he continued, as he led her away. "She desired me to tell you of her departure."

Rose gave him a quick look through her long lashes.

"I suppose she found it dull?" she murmured. "I thought you might have interested her."

"It seems you overrated my powers," he answered, with a smile.

"Every one was talking of how lovely she looked," said Rose.

"She is always lovely," he remarked, quietly.

When the waltz was over Rose said:

"Let us go out into the grounds for a little while. Something had occurred between him and Felicia, she was thinking, and she had determined to find out what it was.

She led the way to a rustic seat not very far from the house. They sat down. Then suddenly Rose leaned forward, a quick exclamation fell her lips, over her pretty children face there flashed a look Warrington had never seen before. A tall young man, a very good-looking young fellow indeed, Warrington decided, tall, well-built and [illegible] and were walking slowly up the avenue.

"Roger!"

Cecil Warrington heard the girl whisper the name, and the next moment she was standing, radiant-eyed and breathless, at the young man's side. The latter stopped and regarded her delightedly, then he caught her hands.

"Oh, Rose!" he cried. "But, I say, how should you be here?"

"I—I—" she faltered prettily.

"You [illegible] boy! Where did you come, Roger?"

"This afternoon." He was still holding her hands and made no attempt to release them. She had completely forgotten the existence of Cecil Warrington.

"Were you coming to the house?" she asked.

"Oh, no," he replied. "I thought I would just walk up and have a look. I had no idea I would be so lucky as to meet you. For the first time he perceived Cecil Warrington's face fell. "I must not detain you," however he added, [illegible]

"You young man must be that old playmate of hers of whom Bedell was speaking—the lodge-keeper's son," thought Warrington. "She undoubtedly is fond of him [illegible]

"You must be sure to come up to the house tomorrow, Roger," said Rose, withdrawing her hands with a slight blush. "I want to tell you how glad I am about the money."

"I'll come after luncheon," he replied. "We'll hardly be up before then. I have a little birthday gift for you, too."

"How nice of you, Roger! Well, good-by until tomorrow."

But Roger was evidently loath to depart.

"I suppose you are having no end of a good time," he said, with an unmistakably jealous glance at Warrington, to that gentleman's amusement.

"Of course," answered Rose. "You know how fond I am of dancing."

"I wonder if he is aware how fond you are of flirting," mused Warrington.

"Well, I suppose I might as well be off," said Roger.

He lifted his hat and turned away very reluctantly. Rose came back to where Cecil Warrington was sitting. Her cheeks were flushed, her eyes were radiant.

"Poor Bedell!" thought the latter.

"I beg your pardon for running off like that," said Rose. "But I was so surprised to see Roger. He and I were such [illegible] friends. We have known each other from childhood. I hope you did not mind."

"Not [illegible] Warrington [illegible] both seemed so delighted to see each other."

She blushed and her eyes drooped.

"She is in love with Roger—a couple of [illegible]

The first person they encountered upon returning to the ballroom was Bedell.

"He is my waits and it is nearly half over," he said, with an injured air and resentful glance at Warrington.

"We won't dance this, I want to talk to you," said Rose, with determination, and he led Rose toward one of the little tete-a-tete rooms opening upon the ball-room.

"He is going to propose," thought Rose. "Well, if he will do it, its best to have it over and done with. I am rather tired of holding him off and I think I am beginning to grow a little tired of him, too. And there's but one way to get rid of him."

So with a little resigned sigh she sank down upon a couch and watched Bedell draw the portieres which shut out the ball room. Then he came forward and bent over her. Her [illegible] bare [illegible] shoulders and arms looked very pretty against the crimson satin of the couch.

"Rose, I love you," he cried. "You know that I love you, do you not?" and he caught her hands.

Rose quietly withdrew her hands.

"Yes, I know it," she replied, "you know," demurely, "you haven't been at any great pains to conceal it."

"I couldn't help showing it. I love you so [illegible] me?"

A sudden gravity overshadowed the girl's face.

"No, I cannot marry you, she answered, in a low voice.

"Oh, Rose—don't say that," he pleaded. "I cannot [illegible] Don't you, Rose?"

Rose hung her head and blushed guiltily.

"I do wish now that I had not flirted with the poor fellow," she was thinking, with the easy repentance that comes too late. "No, I do not care for you in that way," she said, aloud. "And that being the case, you would not of course wish to marry me."

"But don't you think you might learn to care," urged Bedell, whose face was a picture of woe.

"No," she replied, firmly, "I never could. I am sorry to cause you pain, but I cannot help it. You will get over this after a little while and there are so many women in the world just as nice as I." Rose brought herself very severely to order as she [illegible] coquettish look, "and you will find one whom you will like just as much."

"How can you say such cruel things!" cried Bedell, with passionate reproach. "I shall never cease to care for you so that it is quite impossible that I should love another woman."

"Oh, you will change your mind some day," said Rose. "And, now, let us return to the ball-room," and she arose.

"I [illegible]

"Good-by," he said, hoarsely. "I thi[illegible] that I had better [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

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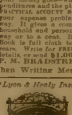

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CHAPTER XI.

"The boy closed his eyes, his breath coming hard with the struggle, and a great wretchedness fell upon him as he dealt with all it held, was parted from him. But he did not pause; outward he went, crying in his heart to God for help, for daylight, in which to save the one he had lost.

"He pulled with every muscle strained well-nigh to breaking. At last he felt himself turning sick with labor, and fell upon his knees and dashed his face and head with water. He was dripping with sweat and his heart was pulsing with fierce and violent action. He thrust his hot arms in the water to the shoulders as he hung over the side of the boat and his dizziness passed. Then he leaped up again and pulled feverishly forward, the first great sense of crime and pollution never lifted from off from him for an instant. A deadly exhaustion began to creep upon him, but he could not rest. He still kept leaping the advancing waves, where all the face of the water there was no sound save the oars creaking in the locks, the rushing of waves and the low slap and gurgle of water under the advancing prow.

"At last the sun began to go down, and he arose in the boat and strained his eyes again across the waters. But nothing was visible and he sank down, ill with agony and exhaustion. The sky burned red all around above him and the lake seemed to shift from side to side. He was a pitiable picture as he sat there, clutching the boat in his dizziness. His hat was gone, one arm was bare to the shoulder where his shirt had been torn away in his struggle with his father, his face was streaked with blood and his hair hung about his throbbing temples in sweat-dampened strands. His tongue was like dust in his mouth, and his throat seemed parched. He caught the oars and sent the craft desperately onward.

"Presently he stood up and looked abroad again. Half the sun was in the lake, and a great road of gold ran from his boat into the very heart of it. Then he saw what was a moving dot entered the golden path and began gradually lifting into the air, a cross of joy leaped from the boy's lips. He seized the oars and the boat flew onward. He was far to the south of his father, and miles and miles of water lay betwe n them, but that one glimpse of the cross was more than days of rest and beakers of wine could be. If God would hold him up, he would but keep the day alive another hour! But even while he prayed the light began to wane, shadows fell over the waters, dusk and huddled together here and there, the westward moving of starlight began to steal over him, and he was alone with the stars upon the wide, mysterious lake.

"Cries of despair broke from his lips at last, a sickening faintness fell upon him, and his swollen hands dropped limp upon the oars. Heaven was against him. He was a murderer and outcast.

"Slowly the night wore on, every moment a thorn pressed deep into his heart by reason of the cross. Why had God let the dawn bring? Would it bring his innocence with it? Was it only a cruel mockery to fall from side to side, and at times he dozed off into a heavy sleep, and ere long the stars looked down pityingly into his upturned face, as, asleep in the storm, with one swollen hand still upon the oars and the other trailing over the side of the boat, he went plunging onward into mystery and gloom.

"Eric Iverson and a comrade had been absent six days upon the lake searching for the lost man and his parents, and the people of Millwood began to wonder if they, too, had gone down to rise no more. But the two men had taken plenty of provisions and many who knew of Eric's tender heart said it would not be long ere they returned and could they bring no tidings to the sorrowing woman and her children on the frowning Head. No storm had arisen, only a steady wind rolling the shining swells forever eastward. Day and night it blew, and incoming schooners had to make long tacks to right and left that they might enter the little harbor.

"It was dusk, but upon the cliff the boy [illegible] and sharp expectancy had passed, and now the gloom that comes of settled, certain death seemed creeping on. The mother, torn with grief and apprehension, through the first days, could do nothing. She seemed to live day and night there at the edge of the precipice, with her hungry eyes searching the wide, mocking reaches of the lake.

"But now she began to work and wash again, moving about much like one in a dream. Little Gale, though her eyes would sometimes fill with tears, played with the children under the trees, happily forgetful of the dark shadow of sorrow that lay upon the place.

"It seemed to the poor mother that the rescuers would never return, and the blighted look grew in her face and her eyes looked sunken and anxious as she lifted them from hour to hour to the wide world of water.

"Other mothers, torched by pity, came to help the drunkard's broken family, bearing food and clothing, and as the time passed dark hints began to be dropped, prophecies of shipwreck for Eric and conjectures as to the fatal phases of this strange race for life upon the inland sea.

"The young men's wharf where he had been foreman of the lumbermen at work loaded many times each day toward the south, and there the absent leader and wives and mothers, standing at the gates in the doorways of the cottages upon the height about the bay thought often of the lonely family over on the Head, and turned their eyes toward the dim, far horizon line.

"On the seventh day the wind shifted and lulled, and just before sunset the Iverson steamer came down the path and stood looking out upon the shining water. Her hearth seemed numb with longing. How would she wake from this horrible dream?

"The children were playing down on the sands below, and suddenly Carl gave a shout. The mother looked up, and there, seemingly not three miles away, was Eric's boat. She grazed, trembling from head to foot. The sail was surely Eric's boat, battered, and with the sails patched and mended. Breathlessly she hurried down and came among the children, where, whispering and clinging to each other's hands, they stood at the water's edge.

"Just as the sun was sinking Eric's yacht swung into the mouth of the little bay. The children held their breath, and the mother strained her pale face outward. She did not see Eric standing and waving his hat at the wharves, nor the wives and mothers watching eagerly toward the boat's deck. The boat was all there was in the world to her.

"How slowly it came! Were Trave and her lame boy there? That was Eric's face, the brave, kind face, the strong shoulders. What other object was that lying upon a bench in the bow? A woman shook as she sat, but even as she trembled the boat rounded on the glassy field and swept in. Eric standing by the Head and Eric, weary and worn, leaped out and made her fast.

"But the woman did not see him; she was down by the side of the boat and straining her eyes down upon that muffled figure in the bow. Men came running from the bluff, and Eric's arms lifted out and there, looking like death itself, lay Trave Armor, dead in his rags and the dying light of the day.

"The woman threw herself upon her knees beside him and spoke piteously, but the children crowded forward with frightened faces and no one stood about with averted faces. In a moment, in answer to Eric's call, Armor's eyes opened weakly, then with a little cry, he sat up, and as he lifted himself toward her, but was too weak.

"Paul!" they moaned the woman, 'where is Paul? Where did you leave him?'

"He was lost, Lucy! He was lost! He saved me, but he was lost!'

"The woman stared at him for a moment blankly, then with a cry of desolation she hid her face upon the sick man's breast and wept.

"Very gently Eric lifted her up and led her away to the hut upon the cliff. The men slowly followed, bearing the man upon the litter, and laid him down in his bunk at home. In a little time Carl came in with the village doctor. The latter placed a flask of whisky to the exhausted man's lips, but when it came near the sufferer's nostrils, such a look of terror, such a loathing came into the sufferer's face that the doctor fell back.

"Take it away! Destroy it! hear-d cried Trave Armor. 'Don't for the love of Heaven, ever offer that to the like of me again. Do you expect to heal me with poison? Oh, think what it has done to me, and his rage fell into a broken-hearted moan. 'Don't ask me to drink it! Let me die! I have been insane! I've been mad! Don't ask me to go on further.'

"Kind hands and sympathetic hearts brought food and words of comfort to the lonely place that night, and as the days went by the story of Paul Armor's he[illegible] spread from mouth to mouth. His father would never drink again, the boy's one thirst was dead, love had followed, and the face of Iverson grew gray and old, but him back and turned his feet toward the peaceful kingdom of virtuous life.

"Time passed. The years in the big kept up their hollow, mellow hum, the boatmen sailed in and out of the port, and Trave Armor lay sick in the upon the hill. Slowly his strength back, but his heart was like lead with thought of Paul, and the mother's [illegible] grew heavy as they went about work. One day he called the sad wife to his bedside and said very gently:

can you hear it now? Does it sound you? Is it better if you heard once how [illegible] our boy went?'

"The mother sat down and hid her face against the pillow by his head, and he sorrowfully on.

"I pushed. I shoved him before it [illegible] pened, it all seems like a dream to me now, but I guess I took the money from [illegible] and I guess I struck him with the oar, too; I was crazy, Lucy! The drink did it, and I don't remember any more, only that I left him lying there and I rowed away. I [illegible] there we met, till I came to myself on the night I was picked up. I don't know what I thought I had died, and was in that world where Paul was while was only fit for like of me.'

"I don't tell you, Lucy, what I suffered after that; I have no words to express it, see it, and it would only hurt you to [illegible] after that awful night, and I was all after that awful night, and I was all alone, [illegible] fearful shapes was all about me, and I don't know why I didn't destroy myself and end my misery. Then that dull misery and pain was like rest and [illegible] torture, and night came again, and I thought I died and then I awoke, and I reason came back. But the hand of God was [illegible] and I was so weak from having no food and from struggling with the awful [illegible] the fearful things that seemed pursuing me, that I lay like a dead man in the bottom of the boat as it went plunging I didn't know where.

"But the thing was killed, Lucy; it was burned out. The suffering I'd gone through had killed it. I was myself again, and again I seemed freezing and a miserable darkness came, and my head seemed going round and round, and I thought I was done in the world kept coming and going, and there seemed to be a voice, but I [illegible] of strange as if it was a dream. The [illegible] and I came again, but couldn't get up, and the darkness kept coming and going, and sometimes I seemed down [illegible] then all of a sudden I saw poor boy's face over me.

"I hardly knew him, Lucy, he was so changed. He looked almost like little Bruce when she lay in her coffin and I thought it was [illegible] and I cried out and said: 'Father, I've come! I've come to save you! Don't give up!' and then I looked myself and saw that it was him. Then he tried to get into the boat with me, but he was so weak it seemed like a miracle that I got the boats plunged as if they would swamp, and I got him in, and then I fell into the bottom and I guess I fainted, for I remember I tried to get up and could not, and I groaned and worn and [illegible] and I groaned and cried over 'em, and we talked and forgave each other.

"Then he tried to steer the boat, but he couldn't set up and for a long time we lay in the bottom of the boat like dead men. But near night he struggled up an' said: 'Father, there's an island ahead, and I guess I'll steer onto it, because the lake has been getting worse for three days, and we can't keep afloat much longer.' So he managed to steer for the island, and when we drew near it, he said again: 'I'm afraid, father, the current is going to carry us by.' And he set the helm to port and I did it. Then he threw overboard into the prow, and when we were about to strike the shore he held me up with his knees [illegible] and I did it. I [illegible] painted, Lucy; his last drop of strength was gone. I got up on my knees and shouted with all my strength to rouse him, but he had no strength, Lucy; he'd given

it all to me!' and tears ran down the big man's face, while the mother sobbed with her face pressed against the pillow.

"Then the boat lurched,' the man went on huskily, 'and it followed the current past the island, and I saw him struggle up and heard him calling: 'Oh, father, I did my best! I tried to bring you back! Methy some ship will save you and if you ever reach home and I never come, tell mother I died innocent!' Then I couldn't hear him no more, and I watched the boat go further and further, and I saw another island off to the west, but just before he reached it the boat struck something—a bar, I guess—and sank, and I fell forward and knew no more, only a sort of dreaming movement of sights and faces, till Eric laid me down there on the sand by the Head, and your calling roused me to life again.'

"His voice failed and they sat a long time weeping together in silence; and all that might ever have been said of praise or blame, or sorrow and love, of regret and new resolve, was spoken in that sound of falling tears.

"The next day was a Sabbath and all was quiet in Millwood. The saws rested from their snarling hum, the millmen, clad in fresh clothing, sat on the doorsills of their cottages, smoking their pipes and looking idly out at the blue fields of the lake, or, down among the fragrant stacks of lumber, sat whittling and talking.

"Over on the Head the sun shone beautifully, yet with little cheer, for sorrow and heavy poverty were there. The children felt it, and the mother went sadly to and there was kissing and crying and handshaking and happy laughter. When Eric noticed that little Gale was crying for happiness in the arms of a lady he had not seen before, and as soon as Paul could get his breath he cried:

"'Mother! Father! This is the little girl's mammy. She was on the steamer that took me off the island where I was washed ashore after the boat sank. She took care of me till we reached Duluth, and I brought her here. She had my knees fixed in the city, and, oh, mother, I am not going to be lame any more.'

"Then the handshaking and cries of surprise and gladness were renewed, and the millmen and the wharfmen swung their hats again and gave three mighty cheers.

"'Two Armor is an old man now, but since that day he has never tasted rum.'

Mr. Norton paused. His eyes were moist. The eyes, too, of some of the listeners were wet. 'To Dannie it seemed a wondrous tale.

"'And how did that boy turn out?' he eagerly asked.

"'Yes, how did he turn out?' said Mr. Young.

The great lawyer hesitated a moment, looking wistfully down upon the. "I had hoped you would not ask that," he said; "I had purposed leaving that to silence. But I guess the entire story is due, since you ask it. Well, the boy turned out just fairly well. You see, I told you the story as I once wrote it. The real name of the boy was Paul Norton—that is my name."

There were exclamations of astonishment. Several of the gentlemen laughingly shook the attorney's hand.

hat night Thad was standing guard on the advance line.

fro, longing for her lame, lost boy. Near noon she stood in the doorway looking out to sea.

A big yacht, with all its white sails spread, blew into the little harbor, but she did not see it, for her eyes were wet. She was thinking of that island, somewhere beyond the blue horizon line, upon whose cruel bar her son went down.

"Presently footsteps came to the door and Eric and Gale appeared, with their sweethearts, entered. Behind them were others bearing bags and baskets, and the children leaped, wild for joy. Aimée arose and came out. His step was slow but steady, and his face was clear. The children, with Gale among them, shouted and danced with glee to see him grown so strong, and the big man's face was lit with smiles as he looked around upon the faces of his friends.

"Then Aimée entered, lifted. Even the mother smiled: something strange and sweet was in the air.

"Suddenly there rose the noise of many voices near the hut, cheering and singing. Eric sprang up, and all stood still and harkened. The singing and the voices came nearer. A great light came into the mother's eyes. She laid her hand against her heart and listened. Suddenly Eric leaped out into the door an answering shout. They all followed him, and along the top of the green bluff a crowd poured into view, and there, borne upon the shoulders of the returning men, sat Paul Armor!

"He was pale and weak, and his poor hands, swathed in white bandages, hung down over the men's shoulders, but his face was like a star. Ah, there was his dear mother with her face wreathed in light and tearful smiles, and his father, loking as if heaven had opened.

"In a moment they had come together,

"And what became of the little Norwegian girl?" asked Mute.

"Oh, yes, I forgot to put that in the story," replied the lawyer, with a smile. "Well, she who was once little Gale is Mrs. Paul Norton now!"

CHAPTER XII.

THE YOUNG DESERTER.

There were expressions of real gratification upon the happy conclusion of Mr. Norton's story. It seemed indeed very fine and so much of good had been born of poverty and bitter trial.

Mr. Howland again shook the lawyer's hand. "I yield the palm to you," he laughed; "I fancied that traveling salesmen had somewhat the best of the balance of mankind in the use of the tongue, but I am now convinced that the honor belongs to the legal profession."

Mr. Norton thanked him laughingly. "Not at all, not at all," he protested, "I have yet to hear a narrative better related than the story you have told."

The big salesman sank back in his chair and held up his hand protestingly. "Spare me these blushes, turn aside these bouquets, and give me a second laugh were quets!" he cried, good natured.

Mr. Young sat quiet. He looked at Mr. Norton approvingly and with keen interest for a few moments. "Seriously," he said, "that which you have told of yourself impresses me. I never knew before that your life had been a romance."

"The lives of many men are romances, the lives of all are more or less tragedies," said Mr. Norton.

Mr. Young nodded assent. "No doubt that is true," he said. "I know the story of a boy—later I knew the man—which, as I sat here listening to you gentlemen came strongly to my mind. It seems to me it is worth telling. I have often thought, should opportunity present, that I would relate it to some writer for publication."

"Tell it! Tell it!" was the cry that came from all sides, only the General Advertising Agent of a great railroad would prove himself capable and entertaining.

Mr. Young sat smiling for a little space, turning his watch-fob about in his fingers and looking at it. The wheels of the cars rumbled softly beneath them, the vast landscape glanced by the windows, ever flowing back-ward toward distant Bidwell. Dannie's fresh young countenance shone with happiness. It had never before fallen in such delightful company.

"Yes," said a man in the group, "tell the story. I think you will have it tell you that I ought to have gotten off this train about thirty miles back. I've simply been hypnotized. If this sort of thing continues I'm going to remain on the train until she gets to St. Paul. It's a picnic, a real treat."

Mr. Howland bowed profoundly as did also Mr. Norton, and every one laughed.

"Well," said Mr. Young, "we certainly don't want to lose your companionship. I guess I will tell the story."

All clapped their hands with enthusiasm, and Mr. Young began:

"My story," he began, after a moment's thought, "is about a boy who went to the Civil War, the youngest soldier, it has been claimed, that went from this State and carried a musket. There were two or three lads who went out as drummer-boys, who, I am told, were younger, but the chap of whom I am going to tell you was probably the youngest active fighter.

"He was fifteen years old, he enlisted, and the day upon which he went into his first battle, at Fort Donelson, was his sixteenth birthday. That was February 16, 1862. When Vicksburg fell—it was during the siege of Vicksburg that he deserted and was sentenced to be shot—the boy was seventeen. You see, though he had been in the war at that time more than a year and a half, he was still a very young soldier.

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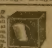

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dier. He was a tall boy when he enlisted, as tall as most men, though, of course, he was slender.

"He ran away to enter the service. He was a creature of imagination; his nature seemed built upon a foundation of steel springs; he simply could not rest. He always not only wanted to be doing something but he always was doing something. He was wild but not vicious. At the bottom of his heart he was tender and sentimental, but, boylike, he kept these promptings covered up. He loved his father and mother and his home as few boys ever do, yet his longing for action and adventure carried him irresistibly from them.

"His father owned a farm near a small town not so very far from the point where the Wisconsin River pours its flood into the Mississippi. The quiet, uneventful life of the farm was, naturally, very irksome to a boy like Thad Mandon. He was a great worker, both in the fields and at his lessons, but he hunted and fished with greater zest and energy."

When Mr. Young mentioned the boy's name—Thad Mandon—Mute started and straightened up, looking at the speaker with surprise and intense interest. He leaned over near Dannie's ear and whispered excitedly, "That's my name! Did you hear it? I am Thad Mandon!"

Dannie could not comprehend. He looked into Mute's face questioningly and then at Mr. Young. "Listen," whispered Mute, wait and hear what he says!" The boys bent forward all eyes and ears, and Mr. Young went on.

"James Mandon, Thad's father, had taken a girl to raise. She was a pale, large-eyed, frail little creature as a child, and Thad's stalwart heart enshrined her. To the boy she was the sum total of all graceful and commendable things, and he was ready at any moment to stake his life in her service or defense. As she grew older, Violet, for that was her name, promised to be very beautiful. She was but a year younger than Thad and exercised a profound influence on his destiny.

"Thad knew all about the causes of the war. He was intensely patriotic. To him it seemed extraordinarily wrong that men should wish to divide or destroy their own nation. The noise and rancor of the conflict came into the secluded corner of the world where he lived and fired him through and through. In fancy he saw armies marching, flags fluttering, bands playing. In imagination he heard thousands of feet tramping, the roar of cannon and the shock of arms. It all seemed wonderful, glorious. One night he could not sleep for thinking of it, and deep in the night arose and went to the door of Violet's room and stood silently a little time, then to the door of his parents' room, where he paused and whispered a farewell, then he stole out into the darkness. He stood a few moments looking up at the dim bulk of the house, then disappeared. The next evening he arrived in Madison, the capital, and the following morning enlisted. Fearing that his parents might interfere with his plans, he did not write to them until he was at the front.

"Now, Thad Mandon was what the men called 'a good laugher.' Always when he was in pain or trouble or ill at ease he disguised his feelings with laughter. So mingled were hardihood and tenderness in his nature that he instinctively adopted this means of covering up what seemed to him the weaker side of him. On this account his comrades nicknamed him 'Laughing Thad.'

"He laughed and sang upon the long marches when other men were dropping from the ranks with weariness; he starved without a murmur, he slept in the cold rain, only to waken at dawn with a yell of merriment; but at the bottom of his heart was a hunger for home which was far more difficult to endure than all his physical hardships. Often when he stood on guard, looking up to the silent stars from some hillside, or standing alone in the rainy darkness in some noisome swamp, the tears under the friendly cover of night would run down his cheeks and his heart would ache with the intensity of his longings. But when daylight came and he was among his comrades he was the most rollicking, daredevil man of all.

"Every officer in the regiment, from the colonel down, knew of Laughing Thad, and praised his feats of daring and his faithfulness. He had been the first man in the regiment to enter Donelson when the final charge was made; he had captured three men single-handed on one occasion and marched them into camp, with numerous other feats. But he fell at last, conquered by the gentlest emanation of the human heart—love and longing for home.

"It came about at Vicksburg. For weary weeks and months the men had fought and floundered in the swamps, had marched, intrenched, retreated and flanked, had slept in the mud, had sickened and died, and it seemed the final victory would never come. But Thad kept on a brave exterior, his energy seemed indomitable, his deeds of reckless daring without end. And yet in secret his life was being eaten out with homesickness. It had become to the young fellow a sort of disease. The doctors called it nostalgia, I believe. His longing to see Violet and his mother and the old home was a veritable sickness.

"One day he received a letter from Violet. His father had gone to the war and his mother was lying at death's door. 'Dear Thad,' the letter ended, 'if you love your mother and me, get a furlough and come home.'

"Then the young chap's dissembling ceased, his laughter died out. He went to his captain. 'I must go home,' he said entreatingly; 'please help me to get a furlough.'

"Together they went to the colonel, but he said kindly but firmly: 'No, we need you too much just now, my boy. We are granting furloughs only to the sick. We expect to have a great battle soon, and can't spare men like you.'

"That night Thad was standing guard alone in the darkness out on the advance line of pickets. It was raining softly, and a sad, crooning sound was made by the slow wind passing through the tree-tops. With strange sighings the sorrowful wind would start up in some far-off spot, and move from bough to bough, swelling almost into a wail overhead, then die away in an undertone of indescribable loneliness. Thad's heart seemed breaking with homesickness, and the pictures his imagination painted of his dying mother and the anxious Violet. The enemy before him was as nothing to this foe which was destroying that which he prized and loved the most.

"Officers might preach of patriotism and the demands of duty, but with his mother dying why should he remain and face the perils of the hour? He gripped his gun hard, the salt tears trickled down his face, and he struggled desperately against his inclination, but at last, with a smothered cry of agony, he dashed his musket on the ground and walked off swiftly through the darkness. Ten days later, footsore and weary, he opened the door of his father's house.

"His mother was alive but unconscious. Two days and nights of incessant care and watching went by, then she opened her eyes and saw his face and smiled. She kissed him once and whispered a faint welcome home, and then sank away into sleep again, a sleep from which she never wakened more.

"Three days later she was buried and the next morning Thad was arrested by the provost guard. Then for the first time he seemed to realize what he was—a deserter! —Sweet Violet clung about his neck and pleaded with the soldiers for his life. But they led him away. Two weeks later a courtmartial before Vicksburg tried him, found him guilty of deserting his post of duty, and the sentence was death. No plea could mitigate the penalty, though the colonel of his regiment and his captain interceded for him, and told of his youth and exceptional bravery and the circumstances which called him home. His desertion was a signal case of unfaithfulness while guarding an important point, and nothing short of death could make of his infidelity the terrible example which it merited. To be shot at sunrise the next day! That was the awful verdict."

This remarkable story will be continued in next week's Ledger. Any one desiring this great serial in book form can procure it, beautifully bound and illustrated, by addressing Lee & Shepard, 202 Devonshire street, Boston, Mass. Price $1.25.

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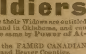

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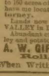

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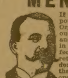

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Under Troubled Skies.

(Continued from page seven.)

That explains much of why I'm so muckle sore about it, and ready to stand back of the colonel, since my fortune's at with his.

Mulliane understood it all, and he wondered how many others there might be whose success or failure hinged on the crook of Rocket's little finger. For himself he believed he could only succeed eventually through his alliance with the all-powerful private secretary to the President.

Now they struck the plaza again, from an entirely new quarter, with the hotel close at hand. Which was a mighty convenient thing for one Mulliane, since all he had to do was to slip over and enter the door of the caravansary.

First he gripped the scrawny hand of the drummer.

"Delighted to know you, Mr. McFarlane, and hope we may see something more of one another presently," he said, with fervor, for he surely meant it.

"I've an idea we will. D'ye know I'm verra curious to knock elbows with ye in one of our friend Rocket's little campaigns, and see how the Yankee blood stands being under fire. Take care of yourself, laddie, and trust no one who can't show proof of being a friend," were the parting words of the commercial man.

After all this night's adventure had brought him an experience that might be of value; and a strange, overwhelming but delightful interview with his little half-sister, so long a stranger to him, yet never quite forgotten, Bob could not regret having followed that messenger who lured him into danger.

When he slipped into the hotel, hoping that he had escaped observation, the very first person he discovered there was the redoubtable Colonel Rocket; and something in the glance which the other shot in his direction told Mulliane this visit of the great mogul in Chilean politics had to do with his interests.

The night was yet young, and bade fair to be prolific of more adventures.

Another installment of this extremely interesting story will appear in next week's issue of this paper. The Ledger is without question the best family paper for the price of subscription now published in the United States. Special free gifts of colored fashion patterns are offered on other pages of this paper. Do not miss them.

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Her Angel Face.

(Continued from page eleven.)

thought she really cared for you though she may have made you believe so at times," said Warrington. "Little Miss Orme is a natural-born flirt."

Bedell heaved a most prodigious sigh.

Warrington glanced a little curiously at the lodge as they passed. There was a light in one of the lower windows. No one came out for the gates were wide open.

"I do not expect ever to enter those gates again," said Bedell, as they passed through.

This strange and highly interesting story will be continued in next week's Ledger. To each subscriber we are still sending free cameras and patterns as advertised on pages thirteen and fifteen.

Still Unruffled.

Uncle Rufus was one of the calmest and most equable of mortals. Nobody had ever seen him excited or impatient. But there came a time when even he lost his temper. The furnace in the basement of his house was working badly. He had been experimenting with a new variety of coal, in which there was a considerable proportion of "slack," and it did not seem to be burning. He threw open the door of the furnace, thrust the end of a long poker into the smoldering mass and stirred it up vigorously.

The result was startling. A fierce burst of flame and smoke shot forth, not only enveloping Uncle Rufus, but blowing out the fine-cape in the room above, and filling the house with soot and ashes.

In the midst of the excitement Uncle Rufus came up from the basement with his usual slow and regular step. His face was black with grime, his eyebrows and eyelashes were singed to a crisp, and what was left of his hair and beard was a sight to behold.

He went to a mirror and took a good look at himself.

"Wal," he said, slowly and deliberately, "I was needing a shave an' a hair-cut, anyway."—Youth's Companion.

He Never Disagreed.

Secretary Shaw and Senator "Tom" Carter of Montana were swapping stories, when the Secretary of the Treasury told a good one about a man who in Iowa town who was never known to disagree with a statement of another, no matter how improbable it might be.

"One day a group of fellows determined to see if they couldn't get Smith—I'll call him Smith," said Secretary Shaw, "to express a dissenting opinion. So when Smith came along one of the boys said:

"'I had a most remarkable experience the other day, Smith. As I was coming into town through the hills yonder I saw a buffalo up a tree eating grapes, so shot him. Did you ever see a buffalo up a tree, Smith?'

"'Well, I can't say that I have,' returned Smith, regretfully.

"'What,' persisted the story-teller, 'never saw a buffalo up a tree eating grapes?'

"'Well, no, I never saw a buffalo up a tree, but,' said Smith, brightening up, 'I know they are very fond of grapes.'"

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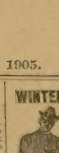

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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES

SUSAN AND KITTY.

"What a dismal sky," said Sue,
"Search for any glimpse of blue,
Never will you find it."
"Yes, the clouds are dark and low,"
Answered Kate, "but still, you know,
There's the sun behind it."

"Oh," said Sue, "the road's a flood,
Nothing rubs boots like mud,
Mine are thinly soled ones."
"Fortunate it was," said Kate—
"New the sheets of rain abate—
That you wore your old ones."

Thus it was the whole day through,
Kate was always pleased, and Sue
Evermore repining.
Kitty—she's the girl for me—
Looked where any hint might be
Of its silver lining."

Much Trouble to Himself.

General Sherman once had occasion to stop at a country home where a tin basin and a roller-towel on the back porch suffised for the family's ablutions. One morning the small boy of the household watched in silence the visitor's efforts at making a toilet under the unfavorable

Some Cunning Sayings.

A little girl asked her mamma one day: "Mamma, do people ever shave bread?"

Mamma—No, child; what a silly thing to ask.

Child—Well, we do, don't we?

Mamma—No, whatever makes you think such funny stuff?

Child—Why, mamma, I heard the cook say she'd have to buy a bread raiser only this morning.

This was said by a friend of mine, about 4 years old. I wh a t her house the day the storm began and she was eating her breakfast of bread and milk, when she happened to upset a little on the tablecloth, for which her mother reproved her and told her that good little girls did not upset their milk. A few moments after that we were out on the porch, when it began to snow, and Mary, without any hesitation, went in to her mamma and said: "Mother, you told me good little girls did not upset their milk. Well, the angels upset theirs, and it was just coming down on me, too!" And with that she showed her mamma some snowflakes which had fallen on her coat.

Beatrice's papa had gone to the country on business. Each night when she said her prayers her mamma taught her to say, "God bless papa and send him home safe." Beatrice misunderstood her mamma, and instead of saying that she would say, "God bless papa, and send him home in a safe." One day as the bottom fell out of an old safe down in the cellar, Beatrice came to her mamma and said, "Mamma, I wonder what God will send papa home in now."

Bill Nye's Reply.

The late Bill Nye replied as follows to a correspondent who inquired about his habits of work and life:

"When the weather is such that I cannot exercise in the open air I have a heavy pair of dumbbells at my lodgings, which I use for holding the door open. I also belong to an athletic club and a pair of Indian clubs with red handles. I owe much of my robust health to this.

"I do most of my writing in a sitting posture or in an autograph album. When I am not engaged in thought I am employed in recovering from its effects. I am very genial and jovial, and to be thrown amongst.

"I dress expensively, but not so as to attract attention. In the morning I wear morning dress; in the evening I wear an evening dress, and at night I wear a night-dress."

Fly Feather!

This is an old English amusement, described by Mr. Burton Kingsland, which affords lots of fun. The players put their chairs together to form a close circle. A small downy feather with very short stem is procured and thrown as high as possible in the air. It is then blown, the object of each player being not to be touched by it. The person it falls upon pays a forfeit, and these are redeemed at the end of the game.

It must not be blown too violently, or it will fly so high that it will be difficult to reach—and the one who blows it outside the circle must also pay a forfeit.

When children play it, they usually prefer to dance around in pursuit of it, but they must not let go each other's hands to catch it in its descent. The player who goes through three rounds without being touched wins the game.

A Breathing Exercise.

To take breathing exercise, stand erect and relaxed with the hands falling at the sides and a cane held crosswise in front. Then inhale slowly, drawing a deep breath, at the same time raising the cane gradually until the arms are stretched above the shoulders, when the inhalation shall be completed. Then with a sudden "letting go" of the breath drop the cane quickly to the back of the neck and pause a moment.

This exercise is of great value to girls and boys with narrow chests or delicate lungs.

Won a Medal.

An American correspondent had just been introduced to Admiral Togo. "I'm very glad to meet you," he said simply.

"What!" exclaimed the admiral, "you're not going to ask me where I am going Togo?"

"No," said the correspondent.

"You are not going to remark that it is better for the Russians Togo while they can?"

"Certainly not."

"You aren't even going to say 'Togo or not Togo?'"

"No, indeed."

"Glory!" shouted the great admiral. "You're the first American I have met who hasn't."

Hastily pinning a medal on the breast of the visitor, he led him to the highball magazine.

Must Wait for a Bath.

"All trouble and inconvenience growing out of the scarcity of water in the new mining camps of Nevada is rapidly disappearing," remarked Oscar J. Smith, lawyer and capitalist of Reno. "They have quite as much water in Goldfield as will satisfy the requirements of a camp. I was down at Goldfield recently, and, notching a sign on a building which proclaimed the fact that baths were to be had there, I went in and announced that I would like to get a bath. The fellow in charge handed me a ticket and took my money.

"Well, see here," said I, "I don't want a bath ticket. I want a bath."

"Oh, you'll get a bath all right,' said the bathhouse manager. 'Let me see your ticket. No. 813. There are about 82 people ahead of you. Come around in about three or four weeks. "

A Roumanian Custom.

A strange custom is still observed in Roumania, which reminds one strongly of Robinson Crusoe. When a servant has displeased his or her master or offended, he takes his boots in his hands and places them before the bedroom door of his master. If he is in a state of great submission, and the boots are either kicked away as an intimation that the fault will not be forgiven or else the servant is told to place them on his feet, which shows that he is forgiven.

Had Seen Hard Wear.

The minister had received a ham as a donation. When it was being gone, little Edith, seeing her mother cutting a small slice for breakfast, said:

"Mamma, the ham's about worn out, isn't it?"

Globe Party.

One player takes a handkerchief, and, throwing it at another, cries "Europe!" A touchkeeper then begins counting ten rather rapidly, and the person to whom the handkerchief was thrown must name some place, river, mountain, person or thing, connected with the countries of Europe, the fore number ten is reached. It may be arranged that the person answering correctly puts the next test question; if incorrectly, or unable to answer, a forfeit must be paid.

The players must be alert and alive, for often the one throwing the handkerchief looks at one while throwing it in quite another direction.—Book of Indoor and Outdoor Games.

Carp Eat Moss.

Did you ever hear of fish eating grass? The farmers in the valley of the Columbia River in Oregon are afraid that the carp in the river will eat up all the grass and leave nothing for the live stock during summer months.

The fish seem especially ravenous for grass this year. They come up on the banks and shove and fight for a taste of it. Every spear within their reach quickly disappears. When the river floods the lowlands it is feared that the fish will clear the pastures hands of vegetation.

A Limited Vocabulary.

"Mother," said Bertie, "the puppy chased Mr. Brown's chickens, but I 'pologized."

"What did you say?" asked his mother.

"He was painstaking me for the eggs and he didn't hear me coming. I went up close to him and said, 'Mr. Brown, will you please spoone me for my puppy chasing your chickens?'"

"And what did Mr. Brown say?"

"He said , 'Ha, ha, ha,' more'n anything else."

The Chance of a Lifetime.

Babykins trudged into a fashionable confectioner's. The clerk leaned over the counter and asked her what she would have. Babykins laid two pennies on the counter.

"Want candy."

"What kind?"

Babykins looked about her, at case after case of different varieties.

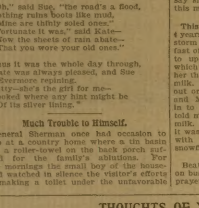
"Dout every kind you got," she said, sweetly.

The Needs of the Inner Man.

Auntie, accompanied by her little nephew, purchased some buns from a baker's wagon. Anxious to teach him to be polite, she said as she handed him one, "Here's a bun, Walter. Now what do you say?"

"Put some budder on," was the innocent reply.

THOUGHTS OF YOUTH.



Mother—The ocean seems to make you thoughtful, Willie.

Willie—Yes, when I grow up I'm going to be a pirate and I'm wondering whether I'll run myself "Remorseless Reginald, the Red Rover," or "Black Bill, the Blight of the Billow."

suspices, but when on the third day the tooth-brush, nail-file, whisk-broom, etc., had been duly used and returned to their places in the traveler's grip, he could suppress his curiosity no longer, so coldly put the question: "Say, Mister, air you always that much trouble to yo'self?"

The Observing Little Jap.

You have heard what a wonderfully clever and successful people the Japanese are. Much of their success is due to their power of observation.

As children part of their education is to learn the art of noticing things. When a Jap is very young a tray filled with a dozen or more objects is placed before him for a few minutes. After the tray is taken away the child is required to repeat from memory the name of every object on the tray. After awhile the number of objects is increased and the time for inspection decreased. In this way the habit of taking things in at a glance is formed. Suppose you children try the Japanese plan. When you have succeeded in being quick at taking things in at a glance, school work will become much easier, and the training will be of advantage to you all through life.

"Bobby."

Of all the fellers on the nine,
I wisht I was the catcher,
To sign for "Ine" an' "Outs" an' "drops."

An' stand there like a statue.
(I'a says that's a Rytonic rhyme;
It's hard to make 'em every time.)

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